



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

### Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

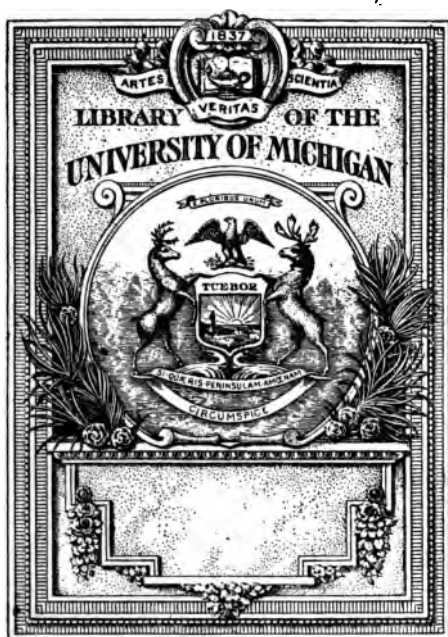
### About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

**A** 403513

**HISTORY  
OF  
IROQUOIS AND CONCORD**

**By SALEM ELY**



101  
111  
E 11



1



64





Very respectfully,  
SALEM, ELY.

**A CENTENNIAL HISTORY**  
**OF THE VILLAGES OF**  
**IROQUOIS AND MONTGOMERY**  
**AND THE**  
**TOWNSHIP OF CONCORD**

---

**1818 TO 1918**

---

By  
**SALEM ELY**  
Iroquois, Ill.

---

Regan Printing House  
Chicago, Ill.



---

Copyright 1918 by SALEM ELY

---

---

TO THE MEMORY OF MY MOTHER  
WHO DEVOTED A LONG LIFE OF  
SERVICE TO THIS COMMUNITY  
AND TO HER FAMILY, THIS BOOK  
IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED  
BY THE AUTHOR

---

**353012**



## PREFACE

This Centennial History has been written at the earnest solicitation of my personal friends, Frank Gilbreth, County Superintendent of Schools, and Frank Hooper, Circuit Judge of this Judicial District. The only reward they offered me was the pleasure to be derived from a siege of hard work, during a siege of extremely hot weather. I feel sure that these gentlemen, who have the best interests of their constituents at heart, and knowing my aversion to labor from the standpoint of personal experience, would not have requested me to do this thing unless it was for the benefit of the community.

If this book should be found to have merit, the credit should be given to these gentlemen. If it appears in attractive dress, the Publisher should share this credit. Its defects, which are many, will be charged to me.

Acknowledgment is made to Mrs. R. F. Karr, Marion Karr, John H. Francis, Gurdon S. Hubbard's Autobiography, Iroquois County Times-Democrat and Beckwith's History of Iroquois County, for some of the data which has been found available.

Very respectfully,

SALEM ELY.

Iroquois, Illinois,  
August, 1918.



## INTRODUCTION

I have been requested to prepare a brief introduction to the following contribution to the local history of Iroquois County. It is with pleasure that I do so. The author, for many years, has resided in one of the most historic places in northern and eastern Illinois, and is especially fitted to write of the subject of which he treats. Almost a century ago, Gurdon S. Hubbard and his pioneer associates came to "The Iroquois Country," as it was then called, and established an Indian trading post near what is now the site of the Village of Iroquois.

The Indian woman, "Watch-E-Kee," later called "Watseka," who has left her name and memory as her sole legacy to the people of this community, enters into the history, romance, and, I may add, the tragedy and pathos, of those pioneer days.

While I have not had the pleasure of examining the manuscript at length, I feel confident that many matters of interest to the people of this county concerning its early history, and pioneer life in general, have been touched by the author in an entertaining and instructive manner.

FRANK L. HOOPER,  
*Judge, Twelfth Judicial Circuit.*





## CONTENTS

	PAGE
The Indian Village.....	1
Iroquois and Montgomery.....	3
Catharine Maggs—Portrait.....	5
Bunkum—Name Given in Derision.....	7
Iroquois—An Indian Name.....	9
Famous Trial.....	10
Watch-e-Kee—The Indian Maiden.....	11
Ancient Land Marks.....	14
Gurden S. Hubbard's Trail.....	16
Patriotic Celebrations.....	19
Old Settlers' Reunion.....	19
Hon. John Wentworth—Address.....	21
James H. Reese—Narrative.....	31
Hon. C. A. Lake—Speech.....	33
Pioneer Story, by Foster Moore.....	35
Address, by Judge Franklin Blades.....	38
Marion Karr—Portrait.....	42
Pioneer Story, by Micajah Stanley.....	48
Pioneer Story, by Thomas Barker.....	55
Pioneer Story, by Hiram Vennum.....	61
Pioneer Story, by Judge S. R. Moore.....	63
Story by Moses H. Messer.....	65
Pioneer Settlers Assembled, Names of.....	74
A Memorable Home-Coming.....	77
George Ade—Address.....	78
Saloons and no Saloons.....	82

## CONTENTS

	PAGE
Inventions by Iroquois Citizens.....	83
Influential Citizens.....	84
Young Men's Opportunity.....	86
Cora (Fry) Brown—Portrait.....	87
Branches of Business.....	89
Fraternal Societies .....	90
Iroquois—Advancement .....	91
Clem H. Hughes—Portrait.....	91
Concord Township—Location.....	93
Concord Township—Organization.....	94
Peter B. Strickler—Portrait.....	94
Prominent Citizens.....	95
Benjamin Fry—Portrait.....	96
Early Settlements.....	96
Pioneer Settlers.....	97
A New Country.....	98
The American Indians.....	99
Period of Slow Development.....	100
Milk Sickness .....	102
Natural Attractions.....	103
The Early Barn Dance.....	104
The Old Time Spelling School.....	105
Worthy Citizenship.....	106
Opportunity A Poem.....	108
The Early Schools.....	108
The Early School House.....	110
The Early School Yard.....	113
The School Master .....	114
Methods of Teaching .....	115
Results .....	118
Religion .....	119
Mrs. Benj. Fly Portrait .....	122

## CONTENTS

	PAGE
Early Churches.....	123
The Pioneer Preachers.....	125
Concord in the Civil War.....	127
Change in Population.....	129
Abraham Carpenter—Portrait.....	129
Period of Development.....	130
R. F. Karr—Portrait.....	137
Concord and the World War.....	139



## **“THE IROQUOIS COUNTRY”**

### **The Indian Village**

When the first white men came to the spot where now are located the villages of Montgomery and Iroquois, they found a large settlement of Indians. Their village embraced both sides of the Iroquois river. The tribe belonged to that powerful nation known as the Pottawatomies—a nation inclined to be peaceable and friendly—and this tribe, prompted by the spirit of their own nation, welcomed to their village the white men with open arms. This was a most fortunate circumstance, for the early white settlers, being so few in number, were compelled to rely for their safety upon the friendship of the Indian, rather than upon their own strength in defense. The Indians as a race represented a wide range of intelligence and civilization according to their nations. They were not the same in their tribal customs and orderly methods. Some tribes were advanced to a point closely approximating the civilization of the white people of that day. Other tribes were so barbarous that they tortured to

death their prisoners of war and ate the bodies. The intelligent groups had their laws and customs, their religious and social institutions and traditions and they lived up to their ideals of commercial honesty and social honor. Had this tribe been hostile towards the early white settler instead of friendly and hospitable, the community might have been delayed many years in its settlement and development. In justice to the red man, who was here before us, for his friendship and many acts of neighborly kindness, there is due his memory a sentiment of gratitude from the white race.

This beautiful Indian village was situated on rather a high table land with small running streams flowing into the river, which afforded excellent natural drainage. It was surrounded by a bank of primeval forest which tempered the cold winds of winter. Within the village was a profusion of stately trees which towered high, affording ample shade in summer. Being little undergrowth, the ground was carpeted with a luxuriant coating of grass, and the soil consisting of sandy loam, the streets were almost free from mud. According to the testimony of the early pioneer, the spot was most beautiful and picturesque—a feature that has been retained to

the present time. Iroquois is still noted for the beauty of its natural scenery. Here nestled the Indian village, its wigwams and play-grounds and gardens. On the south bank of the river was its burying ground. It was here the children played their innocent games of childhood and the young men planned for the chase. The old men gathered in groups and smoked their pipes and told their stories of adventure while the women worked the gardens and prepared the simple meal. Here too the young lover wooed and won his dark mate and plighted his eternal love and devotion. Here the young Indian maidens gathered in clusters when the evening shadows fell and promenaded or gave their social functions. This tribe had its social laws and customs, which they observed. They loved their families and were attached to their homes.

### Iroquois Village

The present village of Iroquois was platted by Henry Moore, June 7, 1836, as the town of Concord, but was not incorporated until thirty-nine years later. It originally contained fifty-two blocks, eleven streets running north and south and five streets running east and west. These streets have names as follows: From east to



west—Short, Clinton, Main, Hamilton, Bunkerhill, Lexington, Spring, Pickawick, School, Seminary and Western. From north to south—Lincoln, Chester, Walnut, Iroquois and Water. In 1845 Aaron M. Goodnow, the owner, by vacating deed, vacated all of the original plat lying west of Hamilton street. Dunning's addition, a strip adjoining the original plat on the north, was laid out some years later; its streets are not named. The corporate limits extend south to the north bank of the Iroquois river and the town lies on both sides of Main street, which is identical with the old Hubbard Trail. At the present it contains a population of approximately three hundred people.

Montgomery, which was laid out a year earlier, lies just south of the river and was first in point of settlement and prominence. It also was built up on both sides of the Hubbard Trail. The original village of Iroquois was surveyed about the same time as Montgomery and adjoins the latter on the east; it also lies south of the river. This village never contained more than several houses at any one time. The streets of Montgomery and the original Iroquois have never been vacated, although both villages have been extinct for over half a century.

This group of towns adjoining one another, and being surveyed about the same time when the country was new and the population was extremely sparse, can be explained only in one way:



Mrs. Catharene Maggs, thirty-five years a resident of the ancient town of Montgomery and the oldest lady now living in Concord Township. She is jolly and looks on the bright side of life. She will soon celebrate her eighty-sixth birthday.

Iroquois county had just been blocked out from the territory of Vermilion county on the south and from Cook county on the north, and the county seat of the new county thus formed was about to be located. As many as eight other town

sites were surveyed in the county about the same time and for the same purpose—to capture the prize. Men in the early day were selfish and ambitious as they are now, and the owner of a large tract of land who had political influence, naturally desired to secure the advantages and profits that the location of the county seat on his premises would bring. With him it was not a question of the greatest good to the largest number, not the location that would insure the greatest convenience to the people as a whole, but the one that would most advance his individual interests. In the scramble, however, whether on account of its greater political influence, or because of its early prominence and being located on the main traveled highway from Danville and Vincennes to Chicago, Montgomery won the prize and became the first seat of justice of Iroquois county in 1837.

The first county records were kept at the house of Isaac Courtright, three-fourths of a mile south of the village, the farm now being owned by R. F. Karr. The first commissioners' court was held in a private house located in the village, owned by William Armstrong. The town was named after the proprietor, Richard Montgomery. The first tavern in Montgomery was kept by Timothy

Locy in 1831. David Meigs, Richard Montgomery and John White followed as proprietors of the public inn. The first white men to locate within the town were Benjamin Fry, George Courtright, Richard Courtright, John White, the widow McColloch and sons, William and Solomon, and many others whose names have been mentioned in connection with the early history of the township and who were more or less closely associated with the very early events of the twin villages—Montgomery and Concord.

### Named Bunkum

This group of towns, at the beginning of their history, were derisively called Bunkum. The name in time grew so popular that they were not generally known by their correct names. The term, Bunkum, has a well authenticated origin. It originated from an incident in the Congress of 1819-21. A member from North Carolina delivered a lengthy oration on the Missouri question, and in the course of which he very naively told those who still remained listening that he was only talking for "Bunkum." The term became popular as a slang word for empty talk or unreal professions and is used on both sides of the Atlantic.

Its original application to these towns has been explained in this manner, which is not authenticated but appears credible: A party of strangers were passing through on their way to Chicago and, finding there was an ample supply on hand of that which maketh the heart glad, they decided to remain over night. They indulged freely at one of the inns and then strolled out to view the town. In the bloom of their hilarity, one of the number was observed to throw his hat into the air and exclaim, "This is Bunkum!" Whether he referred to the town or something else is conjecture—the thought uppermost in his mind at the moment will never be known; but the contents of his stomach will not admit of doubt. From this incident the by-standers took up the word and passed it around. It rapidly spread. Letters posted anywhere in the United States addressed to Bunkum, Illinois, would find their way to the place.

The Government, however, never recognized the name and the post office continued under the name of Concord. In 1871, when the Big Four established a station in Concord, they named it Iroquois. Then in 1875, when the town of Concord was incorporated, the village was officially named Iroquois. The Government followed the

precedent and changed the name of the post office to Iroquois.

"Iroquois" is an Indian name and received its prominence from a powerful Indian Nation by that name. Iroquois river was named after this nation, then the Iroquois territory, then the town south of the river, then Iroquois county, then the present railroad station, then the present village of Iroquois, and finally the Government fell in line and named the post office IROQUOIS.

While the word Bunkum has had a tenacious life, it has long since fallen into obnoxious desuetude, and is never used in connection with the town except by some resident who, after a Rip Van Winkle absence of many years, returns to the scenes of his childhood.

The first election held in the county was held in Montgomery in 1833. The first white child born in the township was Wm. L. Eastburn in 1834. The marriage of George Courtright to Agnus Newcomb is believed to have been the first to take place in the county. The license was obtained at Danville and the ceremony was performed at the house of Isaac Courtright, where the county records were kept.

### Famous Trial

In the month of May, 1836, Montgomery was the scene of a famous trial. A man named Thomasson had been indicted in Cook county, charged with the murder of Charles Legree, a resident of the village of Chicago and a blacksmith by trade. Legree, with fifty dollars in his pocket, started to walk from Chicago to Joliet. On his way he was seen in company with a man on horseback. The second day his lifeless body was discovered near the road and the man who had been seen with him on horseback the day before had disappeared. The story rapidly spread and a man named Thomasson was finally arrested and was identified by several witnesses as the same man who was seen in Legree's company. A knife identified as the property of Legree, was also found in the possession of Thomasson. A change of venue was taken to Iroquois county and the prisoner was brought to Montgomery, the new county seat, for trial. In the absence of a court house the trial was held in the house of Richard Montgomery. Thomas Ford, then a member of the Supreme bench, was the trial judge. The evidence was all circumstantial, as Thomasson persisted in his plea of not guilty, and there was no eye witness to the crime, other than the guilty

party. The people and the defendant were both represented by able counsel. The trial lasted more than a day and the circumstantial evidence submitted to the jury convinced them beyond a reasonable doubt of the defendant's guilt. They were out but a few hours when they returned a verdict of guilty. The sentence was pronounced the same day by the judge, and the day set for execution about three weeks later. The condemned man was hanged from a walnut tree which was then standing on the north bank of the river near the wagon bridge. The tree stood there for some years after as an object of awe and curiosity to the traveler who passed by on the Hubbard trail. It now seems strange that the first person to commit murder in Cook county should be tried, convicted and executed in what is now the extinct village of Montgomery.

### An Indian Maiden

A pathetic story is told of the tragic life of a young and pretty Indian maiden, named Watch-ee-kee, from whom Watseka, the present county seat of Iroquois county, derived its name. She was the niece of an Indian chief of the Pottawatomies, and was born and reared in the Indian village which peacefully nestled in the sheltering



forest where the towns of Montgomery and Concord are now situated. It is said that this maiden was not only charming in manner but was bright and intelligent. The story has interest not only for its local coloring but because it gives a glimpse into the social side of life at a time when the red man's civilization was yielding to that of the white man. Beckwith's History of Iroquois County gives the story as follows:

“When Col. Hubbard came among the Indians on the Iroquois, he soon saw the necessity as a matter of protection and safety, to form more intimate relations with them than that of mere trade, and therefore in the course of time married—according to the Indian custom—an Indian woman by the name of Watch-e-kee, who was the niece of the Pottawatomie chief, Tamin, whose village was then on the present site of Concord (Buncombe). In answer to an inquiry made by the writer as to this matter, Col. Hubbard says: ‘I have no wish to deny the fact of her being my wife, given me by her uncle (the chief) when she was about ten, in the place of his own grown daughter, whom he presented to me and whom I declined. This little girl was to take her place, and was, under my pledge to make her my wife, brought to me by her mother at the age of four-

teen or fifteen. She bore me a daughter, who died at about eight months old. I lived with this Indian woman about two years in harmony. Our separation was by mutual agreement, in perfect friendship, and because I was about to abandon the Indian trade, and of course my connection with her tribe. Both thought each other's happiness would be promoted by separation, as it doubtless was.' The names of the father and mother of Watch-e-kee, or Watseka, as she was called by the whites, appears to have been unknown to both Hubbard and Vasseur, as they so state to the writer. Watseka was born at the Indian village at the site of 'Buncombe,' about the year 1810. She is said to have been a handsome, intelligent and superior Indian woman. After her separation from Hubbard, according to the Indian custom, and his retiring from 'Buncombe,' she in 1828 married Noel Le Vasseur, who had been left in charge of the post. Her tribe, except a remnant, were removed west after the treaty of October, 1833, and she and Vasseur then removed to Bourbonnais Grove, on the Kankakee river. She bore him several children, some of whom are still living in Kansas. She went west in 1837 with the remnant of her tribe, and located near Council Bluffs, and there married a

Frenchman by the name of Bergeron. When she went west Mr. Vasseur took her in a carriage as far as the Mississippi river, and it is said made ample provision for her, and that she was in comfortable circumstances until her death.

"About the year 1863 she returned on a visit to Mr. Vasseur, at Bourbonnais Grove, and from there she plodded her weary way afoot and alone to the scenes of her childhood, and visited the graves of her kindred and tribe near Middleport and Buncombe. Sadly she left, as the last Pottawatomie to set foot on the soil of Iroquois county, and returned to Kansas, and about the year 1878, in the Pottawatomie Reservation in Kansas, passed to 'the happy hunting grounds.'

"Noel Le Vasseur died at his home in Bourbonnais Grove in December, in 1879, several months after he visited Iroquois during the Old Settlers' Reunion held in the Dunning Grove."

### Ancient Land Marks

None of the buildings that were erected before 1850 are standing on either side of the river, and most of the great forest trees that adorned the place in its early history have disappeared. The old Fowler home is still standing on the north side of Lincoln street. It was first occupied by

Doctor Fowler, a practicing physician of an early day, who owned the farm upon which it stands. It was built in 1854 by Peter Frownfelter, and is now owned by Wm. Dale of Kankakee.

Another land mark, equally prominent, is the two-story frame dwelling standing on the hill on the west side of the old Hubbard trail. It was built two years later by Daniel Ayres, its first occupant. It afterwards became the home of Charles Sherman, then John L. Donovan, then Peter Frownfelter, who for many years was the postmaster of Concord and the school treasurer of town 27. It is now owned and occupied by John H. Francis. These buildings were constructed from lumber hauled by ox team from Logansport and LaFayette, Indiana.

Another dwelling, built several years later, faces Main street from the east. It was occupied for many years by F. M. Karr. The present occupant is Abraham Carpenter, an old resident, and one of the five remaining veterans of the Civil War residing in the township. He has reached the mature and interesting age of 82 years and is still one of the hale and hearty, motoring through the country in his Ford. The material in this building was hauled by horse team from Kentland, Indiana.

The old town of Montgomery has none of its ancient buildings remaining to tell the story of its former prominence. Its public inns and business houses and dwellings, once the rendezvous of the pioneer, have long since crumbled and passed away. Seven dwellings are now standing on the site of the old town of Montgomery, but they have been built in later years, and its blocks and streets and alleys, which once had visions of a court house and a jail and a population of lawyers and judges and county officers, have been converted into corn fields and war gardens.

### Gurdon S. Hubbard's Trail

The following sketch is an extract from the autobiography of Gurdon S. Hubbard, compiled in 1888, which explains the Hubbard Trail in his own language and refers to his visit to Iroquois in the fall of 1880:

“The goods and furs I proposed to transport to and from the Indian hunting grounds on pack horses. In this manner the long, tedious and difficult passage through Mud lake into and down the Desplaines river, would be avoided, and the goods taken directly to the Indians at their hunting grounds, instead of having to be carried in

packs on the backs of the men. During the year 1822, I had established a direct path or track from Iroquois post to Danville, and I now extended it south from Danville and north to Chicago, thus fully opening Hubbard's Trail from Chicago to a point about one hundred and fifty miles south of Danville. Along this 'trail' I established trading posts forty to fifty miles apart. This 'trail' became the regularly traveled route between Chicago and Danville and points beyond, and was designated on the old maps as 'Hubbard's Trail.' In the winter of 1833-34 the General Assembly ordered that a State road be located from Vincennes to Chicago, and that mile-stones be placed thereon, and from Danville to Chicago the Commissioners adopted my 'trail' most of the way, because it was the most direct route and on the most favorable ground. Through constant use by horses, ponies and men, the path became worn so deeply into the ground that when I last visited the vicinity of my old Iroquois post (now called Bunkum), in the fall of 1880, traces of it were still visible, and my grand nephew, a little lad of fourteen years, who accompanied me on the trip, jumped out of the carriage and ran some distance in the trail where I had walked fifty-eight years before."

The above narrative does not only describe the Hubbard Trail in Mr. Hubbard's own language, but refers to his visit to Iroquois in 1880. The public highway running through Iroquois and Montgomery north and south is a part of the old Hubbard "trail," and the state road referred to in the above sketch. This explains the prominence of the location of Iroquois in an early day and the location of frame hotels on the south side of the river in the village of Montgomery. Also two frame hotels on the north side of the river which stood nearly opposite each other on the hill. These public inns were two-story structures, were made to accommodate the greatest number of guests with the smallest amount of space. Their small windows and low ceilings would not appeal to the traveling public of today, yet according to the testimony of the oldest citizens, these inns were crowded every night in an early day with farmers and business men traveling along the Hubbard Trail. These unsightly buildings remained standing until some time after the Civil War, in silent testimony of the life and activity of the village during its early history.

### **Patriotic Celebrations**

Iroquois from its earliest history has been famous for its celebrations of our national Independence Day. July the 4th has been associated with patriotic demonstrations. Two years only have been permitted to escape, one when an epidemic of small-pox prevailed, and this Centennial year, when the citizens decided to support Watseka in its county celebration.

In an early day the people assembled in a grove on the north bank of the river, but when this grove was converted into a corn field and its trees into saw-logs, the village purchased a twenty-acre tract of timber from William Dunning. This was made into a park and received his name. This park is centrally located facing Main street on the east, and is well adapted for the accommodation and comfort of large gatherings.

Before the country was well settled the people came for many miles to celebrate and to meet old friends widely separated. In latter days, while these gatherings continue large, they are made up mostly of the population of the immediate vicinity.

### **Old Settlers Reunion**

In 1879 an Old Settlers' Reunion was held at Iroquois, which continued three days. The at-



tendance was conservatively estimated at seven to eight thousand people. A great effort had been made to secure the presence of all the old settlers then living. Much time was spent in looking up names and addresses and sending personal letters to the pioneers of the country still living. Free entertainment was offered to all who came. Amos O. Whiteman, prominent in local history, was president, and Salem Ely was secretary. The proceedings were reported verbatim by William Shortridge, an old resident, and later official court reporter of the county. This gathering of these old settlers has a great and increasing historic value. It was the first and the last great assembling of the early pioneers whose recitals of their early experiences and the hardships in the new country have been recorded and preserved. The men who made the history gave it in their own language. The pioneers who addressed the assembly were: Judge Franklin Blades, Judge S. R. Moore, Hon. John Wentworth, the first member of Congress of the district, familiarly known as "Long John"; Hon. Hiram Vennum, Noel Vasseur, who died two months later, Amos O. Whiteman, James R. Reese, C. A. Lake, Augustus Bingham, Thomas Barker, Moses H. Messer, and Hon. Micajah Stanley. They had been se-

lected from the pioneers who lived within a radius of which in an early day, Iroquois, or rather Montgomery, was the social and political center. These orators rose to the occasion and their rugged eloquence touched the hearts of the people as they rehearsed the tragic story of the hardships and bitter experiences of the new country through which they had triumphantly passed.

These speeches are here embodied, not only on account of their local historic value, but because the pioneer history of Concord and Montgomery is closely interwoven with that of Iroquois county and the immediate surrounding country. Col. Wentworth, of Chicago, who had served from 1843 to 1851 as representative of what was then the Fourth Congressional district, of which Iroquois county was a part, was the first speaker presented and delivered the following address:

#### Hon. John Wentworth's Address

Ladies and Gentlemen: I have no doubt that many of you here today have great pleasure in meeting your old friends, and I assure you that, however great your pleasure may be, mine is as great as any of you can enjoy on this occasion. I long have wanted such an opportunity as this, when I could meet the people of Iroquois county

and the people of the twenty-two congressional counties I used to represent in Congress; where all party affiliation and names could be laid aside, where we could meet again as brothers, rejoicing in each other's happiness and society and talk over our hopes for the future.

In these meetings you can renew your old associations and tell the rising generation how much their fathers and grandfathers suffered in the early settlement of the county. I tell you, fellow citizens, of all the suffering in this country I ever saw, Iroquois county suffered the most in early times. There was no community through which I passed that attracted my sympathies as did this; yet I saw some of the finest land the sun ever shone upon among you, and I saw hundreds of acres that were overflowed, so much so that people could not get to market. You suffered from disease and the sudden overflow of your streams, and when you went away on a visit for a few days, you did not know when you could get home.

In the spring of 1843 I made my first visit to your vicinity. In coming through from Danville, I rode out about twelve miles to a man's house by the name of Gilbert. The road on which I was traveling came to a stream of water: I could

see where the road went into the stream and I could see where it came out on the other side, so in I went. Old father Gilbert saw me and hallooed, "Stop, stop, that stream is out of ride." That was something I had not heard before and I did not know what it meant. I stopped my horse and said, "Say that again." He said, "This stream is out of ride." I asked what I should do, and he said, "Head it," and that I did not understand. I backed my horse around and got out of the stream. He then told me to go up the stream and cross the sources. He says, "Up some little ways you will cross one of them, a little further on you will cross another one, and when you have crossed all of them come back again and get on this road." I followed his advice and thus I traveled, eating my breakfast at Danville, and seeing no other person. But there was plenty of prairie and plenty of these little streams to ford, not knowing where I was. I thought it was going to Congress under difficulties. The track I was on led to a ridge, and there I found a gentleman living by the name of Rothgeb, where I stopped. He had no hay for my horse, but he had plenty of corn. When I got to the house I told him my situation. The old lady began by saying they had nothing to eat. I said, "Tear a board off the

side of the house; I am hungry enough to eat anything." I have eaten a great many good dinners at different places and with different men, but I have no recollection of ever eating a meal that tasted better to me in my life than that one prepared for me there.

The next morning I started to Middleport and I found another stream "out of ride," and I had to "head" that. When I got to Beaver creek I found a man by the name of Rakestraw—and when I got to Washington I got the old fellow a post office. I don't know how long he kept it; there was nobody but him there.

The way I got across that stream was to ride in a boat and swim my horse by the side of the boat, and the old man took my wagon to pieces and boated it across. I think I visited almost every man in the county and formed the acquaintance of almost everybody, and it paid me well, for the people were very kind to me. In all my positions I do not remember any greater kindness than the people of this part of Illinois showed to me, and I never had an opportunity before of returning my thanks to them for their almost unmerited generosity. I had to take my horse and buggy and go from Chicago down to La Salle, and then to Bureau county, and then cross

over to McLean county to Bloomington, and from there to Danville, and then up through here to Chicago again. The young people here may know something of what their fathers had to undergo when they hauled their grain to Chicago to get their living. During my travels among you many incidents took place, one of which I shall relate to you.

When I got out this side of Danville to a place called Denmark, where nobody knew me nor did I know anybody, I saw one man edging around as though he wanted to get acquainted with me, and I gave him the opportunity. He said, "Are you this long John that is running for Congress?" I told him I was. He said, "Lay low; I am acquainted here and know them; they are all against you. And let me tell you not to run—the question—just you lay low and don't you talk the question. Tell them something about improving the country." And he commenced introducing me. I afterwards found out his name was John Young. I told them about the condition of the country, what we needed by way of improvements, and made them, as I thought, a pretty good speech, considering that I had to lay low on the question. There was one gentleman there who seemed to be boss of the town and had the

post office. He said, "Mr. Wentworth, we would be very much pleased to hear your views on national politics." He had no more than got the words out of his mouth before Young stepped up and said, "He is not going to run the question. If you want that done, bring down a man of your own and let him talk the question." I took John Young's advice and would not let the old fellow draw me out. Some years after, when I had forgotten all about it, one day while walking the streets of Chicago, a man grabbed me by the arm and said, "I want to see you once more before I die." He said, "You have been in Congress until you have given away all the swamp land and got the Illinois Central railroad. Now, I want to know how long it would have taken to do that if you had talked the question all the time." In passing through the south part of the county once, I rode up to the house of an old gentleman who had gone away from home, so I thought I would talk to his wife about politics. They had recently come from England. I asked her about her husband and she said, "I don't know anything about his politics, but I heard him say the other night that he was for electing Long John to Parliament."

Passing along for three or four hours I came

into the timber where there were some men erecting a log house. I rode up and asked them something in relation to their views about the legislature, and one of them said, "Let these men alone. We have got all the work we can do, and we are going for the tallest man out." I said, "You are going for the longest man out." He said, "Yes." Then I said, "Maybe you would like to see me stand up," and I stood up and they all laughed. I soon got on the good side of them and then they wanted me to come over and make a speech. I said, "No; if another fellow comes along taller than me, you go for him, but I will take the consequences if you vote for the longest man."

I once went to Esquire Hill's, out near Kanakee. I had been getting my buggy out of a slough and was very much tired out; I went up and asked for some dinner. They informed me I could have it. The esquire was away. I asked for a bed to lie down. The room in which they put me was partitioned off with boards up and down and they hadn't newspapers enough then to paste over the cracks. I heard one of the girls say, "I know it's him—father said he was six feet and a half." Another said, "I think this is a younger man." One of them said, "It's quick telling." And they got a rule and measured me.



While they were gone I straightened out as many inches as I could. Of course I was asleep and they made me six feet and eight inches. I got my dinner and went out on the prairie and met the esquire coming home. He said, "Did you go to the house?" "Yes, sir." "Did you get your dinner?" "Yes, sir, and the girls measured me." "Measured you?" "Yes, sir." "Well, the girls will never hear the last of that."

It generally took me several days to get around as I had to see the people. I found the best way was to find out the feeling of the people, and if I found a man was against me, take John Young's advice and lay low on the question.

When I first came among you there were but four post offices before Kankakee county was cut off; one at Mount Langdon, one at Middleport, one at Milford and one at this place. I came to the conclusion that it was pretty hard to keep up a correspondence with the county when they had a mail on horse-back only once a week. I said here is a people doing business with Chicago and these were all the facilities they had, and the way to get you more I did not know. When I said anything about it, the Postmaster General would fling back into my face that it did not pay; it was costing the government two hundred dollars a

year. I told him to give us more post offices and we would settle up the country and it would pay. The clerk came down to my house and he was a favorite clerk of mine. He said we are going to weigh that mail and if it comes to as much as you say we are going to do something for you. The next morning I went up to the office. I saw a number of old volumes of reports there, belonging to one man as much as another, and are printed and sent to the people, and I was entitled to the franking privilege, and I got a good deal of work, I tell you. I got every old paper and bundle I thought anybody would read here in Iroquois county. Then I went into the post office and asked about those seeds that were to be scattered around. I thought my constituents would like some of them. In about two weeks a letter came from the Chicago post office inquiring what was to be done with all the mail for Danville, as they would have to double their trips.

Now you are receiving mail by steam on almost every train that passes. At that time Wisconsin on the north and Iowa on the west, were only territories. We had then to find out what the people wanted and then try to get it. I do not know what you would have done if we had not got the Illinois Central railroad, and that was my song

and my labor when I was your representative, and I achieved it, and a grand result it was. And then I bid the people here good-bye, for I was set off in another district.

Here is a list of the votes I received when I ran for Congress. I first received 195 votes and the other man 145, making a total of 340 votes. The next time I got 217 and the other man 135, making 352 votes, an increase of 12 votes. I supposed somebody had moved in. Again I received 290 votes, and the other fellow 177 votes, making 467 votes, and the last time I ran in 1850, I got 333 votes and the other man 274, making 607 votes in eight years. When I look back and see how hard I worked and the difficulties I endured, I think I worked pretty hard for these 333 votes for my election. And after I got the Illinois Central railroad I thought I had paid you pretty well for what you had done for me. When I left you there were seven post offices; one at Courtright's Mills, Middleport, Mount Langdon, Milford, Plato, Beaverville and Iroquois.

Now, my fellow citizens, you have come together today to inaugurate an old settlers' meeting. I would advise you to keep them up, for I think it will be the best legacy you can leave to your children to let them know you were the

first settlers of this county. There is nothing like these old settlers' meetings to keep these things revived. I have met people here today that I thought were dead; and perhaps some of you may have thought I was dead. You have come together today to renew your old friendships and to exchange greetings in this county that was once so desolate, but has now been rescued by the hand of industry. Again I urge it upon you to keep up these meetings.

When I came around here the first time soliciting your suffrages, they told me I was the first candidate that had ever set foot in Iroquois county. I suppose you see plenty of them nowadays. I had then to visit almost every house, and I am glad I did so.

There are a great many aged people here today that perhaps will never have another opportunity of speaking to you again and I will give you an opportunity to listen to them.

I thank you for coming here today. I am here to thank those that supported me, and to those that are not here, to thank their children and grandchildren for what they did for me.

James H. Reese was the second speaker. He was one of the first settlers and the official sur-

veyor who laid out the towns of Montgomery and Concord. He returned nearly a half century later and told the brief but interesting story of his achievement. He said:

Ladies and Gentlemen: I am not here to make you a speech. I was called upon simply because I was an old settler. I came here in the fall of 1834 and left on the 31st of October. I had an appointment as surveyor under John McDonald, but he had never taken the oath of office and could not act. The next spring after that I returned and laid out the town of Montgomery. I went to Danville and got my appointment there. I left there again in the spring of 1835 and I returned in the spring of 1836 and laid out Concord. At that time it was twenty-five miles to a house, which was then called Hubbard's Trading House. There was another located on the Kankakee river. I left there and went to Parish Grove on Sugar creek. The country at that time was very sparsely settled, and we did not use floors in our houses, and we used benches in place of chairs. I have met but one person here today whom I have any recollection of seeing before in this county; there may be others here, but I have not met them yet. It has been about forty years since I left here. I am glad indeed to see so many

people here today, especially so many aged people, and I hope you may enjoy yourselves. I thank you for your attention.

The Hon. C. A. Lake of Kankakee was the next speaker. He was not one of the first settlers, but came to the new country early enough to be able to speak from personal experience. He said:

Ladies and Gentlemen: I do not know that I can be regarded by you as an old settler, although I have lived near here since 1852, a period of about twenty-six years. So far as the change of the country is concerned, it has been wonderful. When I heard of this meeting I was very anxious to come. I thought I would like to see the people who inhabited this part of the county before I came. I have been well paid for coming, and for the opportunity to hear Col. Wentworth.

I came to Kankakee the same year the county was organized, which was in the fall of 1853. The Illinois Central railroad was constructed as far as our place at that time. I believe there were only seven houses there then; a small frame house on Court street, a boarding house or two near the depot, and a stone hotel erected by Mr. Vanmeter. There was no bridge across the Kankakee river above Wilmington. In a year or two

later I came to your court house in Middleport. It was not very large then, but the means of getting there were better than when Col. Wentworth used to visit the place. We would go to Onarga and then across to Middleport by stage. While I recognize this county now as one of the best for land, I did not think so then. It did not look right to me—I was raised in the timber and it looked too uniform and dead. It appeared to me that we would never get rid of the great quantity of water on the ground—it looked like a swamp. But now we see elegant houses and farms and growing orchards.

I heard of this place called Bunkum when I first came to the county. When I heard of Mommence and Middleport, Bunkum sounded as large and prominent as any of them. I never saw the place until about five years ago when I came down here on the Fourth of July.

A great change has come over this county since the first settlers came. This land, which was not considered very good, has been turned to a productive purpose. It has been fertilized by the industrious husbandman until all over the county everything bears the mark of thrift; instead of the swamps you now have the harvest fields. You now have a railroad across the western part of

your county; you have one running east and west and another running diagonally across the county. In place of the prairie grass growing as high as a horse's back, you have farms, orchards and flower gardens, which make it look as though it had been settled for one hundred years.

This part of the country has been overlooked—that makes it settle faster now than formerly. Then the earlier settlers passed on west to where it was more rolling. Before the Illinois Central railroad was built you were in the background, but since then it has built up faster because the country was settled farther west. Who can tell what this county will be in twenty-five years? These low lands, once regarded as almost worthless, are now converted into nice farms, and there is no limit to their production. It will some day be the richest portion of the country. Iroquois and Kankakee counties will be classed among the most fertile and productive of the great state of Illinois.

#### Pioneer Story by Foster Moore

Mr. Foster Moore settled near Iroquois as early as 1831. He came from Ohio. His address is a most graphic narrative of his early experience in the new country. He said:



My Fellow Citizens: Not being in the habit of making speeches, perhaps some of you would rather not hear me. I have been forty-eight years in this country, called the county of Iroquois. I came here and settled with a large family—my father's family; I was not married then. I have been breaking the ice and draining land for several years; I have seen a great deal of it, and perhaps it may be worth relating. I have helped to bridge the Kankakee river with hay. When the ice was not sufficiently strong to bear us we would throw hay on it and run the water over it and let it freeze, and in that way make a bridge. I have gone over this route from the Wabash to Chicago, I expect fifty times, when there were no houses to stop at. We had to carry our provisions and horse feed along with us. Today I feel proud that I am permitted to behold as good a county as this, which used to be so uninviting. We now have beautiful farms where once all was ponds and lakes. I have traversed the Kankakee river from its source to where it ends; I have visited Beaver lake and caught fish where corn is now growing. I used to meet Col. Wentworth on the streets of Chicago, and go to his office and get blank forms of deeds. I worked on the first

building on Lake street in Chicago in the fall of 1832, being a ship carpenter by trade.

Col. Wentworth desires that I tell you an anecdote on him, which happened when he was running for representative to Congress in this district. He had been down south of here and was making his way back to Chicago. I was then living about five miles from the county seat of this county and the water was very high; about a mile and a half north of my house was Sugar creek, and the water was backed up over the bridge, and when the Colonel started to cross the stream he missed the bridge and went into the water, and, being a very tall man, he took the horse by the mane and piloted him to the shore and came back to my house to dry. At another time there was a lawyer by the name of Brown, from Chicago, who came through there, and his horse was drowned, and the old lawyer was the next thing to it. The next day they fished his papers out of the creek.

I am rejoiced to see so many of the old settlers here today and I hope I may have an opportunity to have a friendly chat with each of you before I leave the ground.

### Address by Judge Blades

Judge Franklin Blades began his professional career at Iroquois as a practicing physician. Early in life he studied law and entered upon its practice in Watseka. He advanced rapidly in his profession and was elected circuit judge. He spent his declining years in California. He was extremely popular with the people whom he served. His sparkling good nature and his aptness in story-telling made him a favorite speaker at public gatherings. This happy faculty is well illustrated in his address on this occasion, which follows:

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen: It does not seem to me to be hardly fair that I should be called upon to address you now, for two or three reasons. It would be well enough were there not genuine old settlers here, but I see those here who were called old settlers when I first came to the county. I am a good enough old settler until I get into their company. When I am away from these old men who have lived in this county ever since I was born, and I am in company with people not much older than I am, I pass myself off as an old settler. To be called out here in the presence of these gray-haired, venerable men is hardly fair. I see here on the

platform my venerable and excellent friend, Micajah Stanley, who came here in 1830, and George Courtright, who came here about the same time and who, I understand, was the first white man married in this county, and Leonard Hogle, who has been here forty years; and Hiram Venum and Squire Coughenour and Uncle John Fry, and my old friend John Wilson. When I am in the presence of such men I feel almost like a youth, although I am on the down-hill grade of life, being well on toward fifty. Many of you venerable men remember me when I came to this county almost a boy. It seems to me a good while ago. It is twenty-eight years since I came here and was taken under the wing of Dr. Fowler. Doctor Fowler was then considered rather an old doctor and had a good reputation among the old settlers of the county. In those long years ago I was a doctor and was introduced and commended to the people by him. I was liberally patronized by the people and made many friends who have continued to be friends to this day.

I got along fairly well in my profession for a youngster. But in later years I have often wondered why it was that people employed me. I was conceit enough then to think it was all right. In later years I came to understand how much I

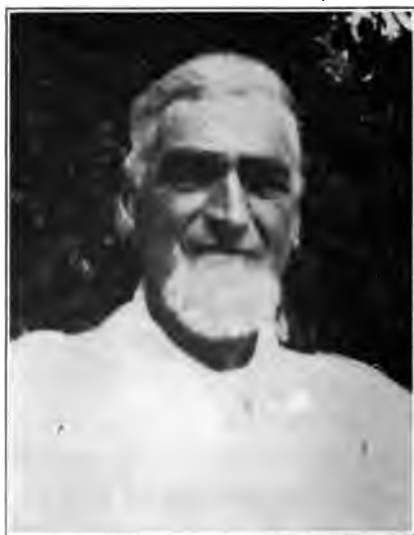
lacked by experience. I am here reminded to tell an anecdote of myself at my own expense—an incident which happened to me in the days of my youth. There dwelt at Lister's Point an old gentleman by the name of Lister—many who are here today knew him well. It was the first season I came here to Bunkum. The old gentleman was sick and he sent for Doctor Fowler to come and see him. The doctor undertook to palm me off on him. I went and found the old gentleman sitting out in the door-yard in a chair. As I approached he said, "You are a doctor, I suppose." I said, "Yes, sir." He said, "Young man, you can go home. I don't want any boys doctoring me." Of course I was much mortified, but I couldn't find it in my heart to blame the old gentleman. I was not much in the habit of relating this story of myself in those early days, but of late years I can afford to tell it.

Again, I am disappointed in being called upon to talk, for I expected to hear Mr. Wentworth, who is a man of high reputation and deservedly so, and of large experience in this county. Whatever may have been the prejudices which, to a greater or less extent, prevailed against him on account of policies when he was a younger man, such prejudices no longer exist. He possesses a great

fund of information concerning the early history of this county and is withal a very agreeable and entertaining man. I am much disappointed in not being able to hear him. I also expected to hear Mr. Beckwith of Danville, for, although his age is not greater than mine, there are few men so well informed as he as to the early history of the northwest, and as to all this part of Illinois. I do not know of any man so well informed in our early history as he, nor one possessing such a fund of anecdote and personal reminiscence. It would have been a rare treat to have had him here today, and let me tell you old gentlemen, I would not wonder if he could tell you almost as much of your personal history as you know yourself. I would not wonder if he could tell you things about yourselves that you have forgotten.

I shall not undertake to relate much of my own personal experience, although I have in my time witnessed great changes, and have seen the greater part of the development and growth of this county. As I came here from Watseka today, and saw the splendid farms and farm houses and vast, waving fields of corn, and the orchards and groves of timber where formerly none were growing, I could not but be amazed at the change that had come over the county. It

is seldom that I have come this way for several years and doubtless I can appreciate this change more readily than you who have seen it almost insensibly take place from year to year and have been a part of it. It almost makes me melan-



Marion Karr, one of the five remaining veterans of the Civil War now living in Concord Township. Co. I, 113th Illinois Infantry. Seventy-three years old. A resident of Iroquois seventy-three years. Continues active in business.

choly when I contrast the past when, full of youthful hope and vigor, I was riding over the prairies with my pill-bags under me, visiting the families of the old settlers in their widely scat-

tered cabins, with the present beautiful and cultivated county.

When I was practicing medicine here, there was one solitary cabin where Sheldon now stands, which sets itself up to be something of a town, which it really is. I used to ride over to that log cabin in which Zadock Parks lived. From there I used to ride over to Sugar Grove, twelve miles further, and there was no house between. From here to Morocco, Indiana, some twenty miles away, was a common ride for me. In my short experience I have seen nearly this whole county improved. We live in a wonderful country and hardly seem to realize it. We do not stop to think or reflect about it—what will it be in fifty years from now, when we shall be dust and forgotten except by our own immediate descendants. What a grand garden this country will be, splendid churches and school houses will thickly dot the plain, and groves of timber will be more numerous than when these old gentlemen came to settle here.

A quarter of a century ago, or a little more, you know, we had no railroads and we went marketing to Chicago with wagons. Why, when I first saw Chicago it had but one railroad, and that came in from Galena. But I ought not to venture too much on my own experience. These old



gentlemen smile when I talk of my personal experience to them. I am almost afraid to relate anecdotes that I have heard from the lips of early veterans, lest I may get them wrong and they may get up here and contradict me. If, however, they will promise to stand by me I will venture on one or two. One comes to my mind as told to me by an old pioneer whom I early learned to esteem. I refer to old Benjamin Fry, who to us is dead, and who is now no doubt dwelling in the happy land beyond the stars. When I first came to Bunkum—we are getting too stuck up to call it Bunkum any more—I became acquainted with him and he used to entertain me with his early experiences. Among other things he told me that he once worked for Gurdon S. Hubbard some six months, and when he got through with the work Mr. Hubbard offered him a horse or two lots on Lake street in Chicago for his pay, and he took the horse.

I shall venture to tell a story connected with the early life of Mr. Stanley, although he is here among us. Mr. Stanley came to this county the same year in which I was born, 1830. A good while ago I learned to treat him with the respect to which respectable old age is entitled. It is interesting to hear him relate the adventures of

the many years he has lived in this county. He is now mayor of the village where he and I reside, and which we, taking on airs, call a city. Many years ago he was sheriff of the county and once represented it in the legislature. Many, many years ago he was sent by his employer to Chicago to get a load of salt, and when he got there they didn't have any. (Here Mr. Stanley explained that he was sent by Mr. Hubbard to Chicago to buy a wagon load of groceries, “and when I got there I had to wait three weeks for the schooner to come in with them. Meanwhile I put in my time hauling material for the purpose of constructing old Fort Dearborn.”)

Judge Blades: Just think of it, my fellow citizens, a man sitting on this platform today with us who, after he had reached manhood, went to this great city of Chicago for goods and groceries with a wagon and was obliged to wait three weeks for the arrival of a schooner before he could get them. What a miracle of change since 1831—since the days, as the man said in the lyceum, that the “aborigines” were here. Chicago is now the pride of the continent and the wonder of the world.

And there are other old men here today who have had as varied and interesting experiences as my old friend Mr. Stanley. I was speaking the

other day to Uncle John Fry in a bragging sort of way about my being an old settler, but he soon took the conceit out of me by informing me that he had been in the county forty-five years; that was when I was a little urchin running barefoot and having the toe-itch over in the beech woods of Indiana. He was a man grown when we came here—I don't know but he was a married man. (Mr. Fry: I was married and had a wife and four children.) Judge: A married man and a large family when he first saw this county forty-five years ago.

Some of you may say—and perhaps do say—if I had only gone further west when I located in Iroquois county, I might have been better off. But there was no further west in those days—this was The West. Then the states and territories of what we now call the west hardly existed, even in name. Where were Kansas, Nebraska, California then? The very names of some of them were unknown then. When I first began to study geography at school, I don't believe Oregon was on the map. Now the great and mighty west extends away to the Pacific. Now we have Oregon, California and Wyoming, and Washington, and Nebraska, and Kansas. Yes, and there is Utah. You have no reason to reproach yourselves for

having located here, for we have a grand good country. Most of you are well-to-do and many of you have greatly prospered. You have formed family ties and social attachments that are too strong for you to think of going away to the west and becoming pioneers again. Many of you may see your children go away to make new homes in the west. But to be a pioneer now is not what it was when you came to this country. They will never know the privations and hardships which were incident to the early days of this country. When people go west now they find as intelligent and cultivated a people as dwell in this part of the country. It is a common thing now for the people to take with them many of the elegancies and luxuries which they have here and scarcely any undergo the vicissitudes which their fathers did in establishing themselves here. When people go west now they find themselves surrounded by the same kind of people they left behind them—the same kind of people we have here in Iroquois county.

We, who have passed the prime of manhood in this county, will probably rest our bones beneath its soil, but I trust we shall see much greater prosperity of our people ere we go to our final abode.

### Pioneer Story by Micajah Stanley

The Hon. Micajah Stanley of Watseka was one of the first settlers. He came to the county as early as 1830 and was closely associated with the early history of Montgomery and Concord. He served in the legislature of this state, was mayor of Watseka at one time, and helped to build Fort Dearborn at Chicago. His own story of his early experience and hardship in the new country is thrilling and instructive. He said:

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen: I came here in 1830 from Clinton county, Ohio. We arrived in the fall. In September we came to the Wabash and stopped three weeks on the Wee-Haw Prairie. We found that country almost without inhabitants. There were some Indians and six or eight families of settlers. The same fall we left there and settled near Milford, then Vermilion county. We found here Samuel Rush, Robert Hill, Daniel Barbee, Jefferson Mounts, Hiram Miles and his father, and Joseph Cox. I came with my father's party, which consisted of my mother, Hannah Stanley; my oldest brother, Wm. Stanley, and his wife Judith; my second brother, John Stanley, and his wife Agnes; my youngest brother, Isaac, and two sisters, Rebecca and Elizabeth. With us came from

Wee-Haw, Wm. Pickerel, an old Quaker, who was the founder of Milford, having laid out the town. Pickerel was a remarkable man; he was a blacksmith, a miller, a farmer, jack of all trades and master of all arts; as honest and industrious as the day is long.

That winter we witnessed the hardest time I ever experienced in my life, being destitute of almost everything. We came with eight head of horses, fifteen head of cattle and a flock of sheep, and we expected to get hay of the people that were there, but the fire had destroyed it all. We had to haul our corn from the Wabash. We hauled what we expected would do us. In December a snow fell ten inches deep, which was increased through the winter until it was eighteen inches deep on the level; then there came a rain and formed a crust on that. The crust was so thick that a dog could run anywhere over it. The snow in places was drifted until it was six or seven feet deep. That fall we had plenty of wild turkeys, but the winter was so severe that they all froze. We had plenty of deer. The dogs and wolves killed many of them, and we could find many deer's carcasses afterwards. The deer were not all killed and we soon had plenty of them again, but we had no more wild turkeys after that.

In 1831 we had a pretty hard time raising a crop. With the heavy rains our streams were filled up very high. In the spring we began farming; we began to plow and break prairie, and we put in ten acres that had been under cultivation the year before.

In the fall of 1830, as I said to Judge Blades, Mr. Hubbard was living here at Bunkum, and had his trading house where Benjamin Fry lived. He moved that year to Danville and opened a store. He employed me and some other men to go to Chicago for goods; he engaged four teams. I took five yoke of oxen. We went a little too soon, and I had to stay there three weeks before the boat came in with the goods. At that time there was not a white family living between here and Chicago. We stayed all night at Hubbard's trading-house and the next morning we started for Chicago. We crossed the Kankakee river above Momence, where Robert Hill formerly kept hotel. The river was bank full, and we had to ride on the middle cattle and drive the head ones. The water ran into our wagon boxes. When we finally reached Chicago we found no goods there, so we had to stay three weeks before the schooner came in. Inside of old Fort Dearborn there were two or three persons doing busi-

ness. Mr. Dole was there, and another gentleman was keeping boarding house. Mark Beau-bien was up the river in a little one-story house, keeping tavern. Mr. Kinzie was up in the forks of the river, and one of the Merricks lived at the old Merrick stand, near the present Douglas monument. There was a little dry land along the beach, and I do not blame Benjamin Fry for taking the horse instead of the land that was offered him.

We left Chicago, and in three days we got to the Calumet river. Sometimes we had to hitch ten yoke of oxen to one wagon to haul it through the quicksand. We were between three and four weeks getting home. We ran out of provisions on our way back and Henry Hubbard met us at Beaver creek with a basket full of provisions. When we got home we rested about three weeks, then took the goods on to Danville. This is my experience on that trip.

After that the country began to settle up a little more. After the Black Hawk war there were two settlements made. My father-in-law, John Moore, settled four miles southeast of Watseka, where some of the family still live. About that time a report came to our settlement, in the evening by the mail carrier who carried the mail



from Danville to Chicago on horseback, that the Indians had followed him until he got to the Iroquois river. He was all dirty and his horse was all dirty, and he was afraid to take his supper at the hotel. Some men who went out to Hickory creek to look at the country also came riding in, saying that the Indians had been following them all day and were close upon them. My mother was in the house and the rest of us were in the field planting corn. We thought it all a farce. The rest of them went away, but I stayed until dark, and when I went through the settlement, they were all gone except George Hinshaw, an old bachelor who was living there. I found him, and when we went through that settlement we found the calves shut up in rail pens, and we tore the pens down and let them out—such had been their haste, they left them in that condition. The next day we went to Parish's Grove, and I said to Hinshaw, "We had better go back. If the Indians had been so near they would have been here before this time." The greater part of the settlers stayed down on the Wabash until fall, so we almost lost that crop. This was in 1832.

In 1833, I think it was, we held an election for justice of the peace in Vermilion territory. There were two precincts—Milford and Bunkum.

We were entitled to two justices, but we did not know this. We thought that both precincts were entitled to but one. Bob Hill and Ike Courtright were the candidates. There was a spirited contest between the two. Hill represented the Milford settlement and Courtright the Bunkum settlement. Each wanted the justice in his own precinct, but the election was held at Bunkum and this gave Courtright the advantage, and he beat Hill two or three votes. Courtright went to Danville and received his commission and executed all the legal business for the whole of this county. But two years afterwards Hill was elected, and he went to Danville after his commission, and, lo and behold, he was presented with one two years old, which he might have had when Courtright got his, as we were entitled to two justices all the time. I was not twenty-one when I came here, but became of age the following February, so I was entitled to a vote, and that was the first time I ever voted in my life. Mr. Courtright made a very prominent justice of the peace. Mr. Hill also was a very prominent man. We had no need of justices then, only to take notice of the estrays. The first business I had was to take a notice of a steer, and I had Mr.

Singleton come up as a witness to the marks on that brute.

When the stranger came to our county then, we met him as we do today, with open arms and a hearty shake of the hand. Then we would go eight or ten miles to help build a cabin. And you, my old friends, who are here today still have the same feeling that you had in the early days of the settlement. When a man came into the county, and we found he wanted to be a citizen we turned out to help him build his cabin, because they were honest and true men, almost all of them. There were but very few men who partook of the intoxicating cup to excess. In 1835 I moved to the place where I now live. I located three miles from any other house. There were plenty of Indians, and they were as honest as any men I ever lived among. They would not suffer their dogs to kill a pig or a sheep, and if they did kill any, they would hunt the man up and pay him for it. That is not the habit of men today. I used to leave everything out where I worked and never lost anything.

I settled in Watseka in March, 1835, where my house is now, and I made a farm there. My friends came around me occasionally, and I used to spend from a day to a week showing them the

county. They would come there and tell me they wanted to buy land to make a home, but not many of them ever came back. Mr. Beckwith was our surveyor, and a very fine man. The land was surveyed and we could find any of the corners we wanted, and locate a man anywhere. That was the situation of our county up to 1835. I have occupied your time longer than I expected. I thank you and will give way to someone else, who can tell you the rest from that time to this.

### Pioneer Story by Thomas Barker

Thomas Barker was among the first pioneers, coming west in 1831 and locating on a piece of land on the east side of the township in Newton county. He was nearly eighty years of age when he attended the Old Settlers' Reunion and delivered the address which follows. His narrative reveals the sunshine of a contented and happy life amid the privation and hardship which he experienced. His glowing descriptions present a pleasing picture of the new country and illustrate the value of looking upon the bright side. He said:

Ladies and Gentlemen: It is now forty-eight years since I came into these grand prairies, and

it seems but a short time ago. A great many changes have taken place since then. You may think it strange, but I am nearly four score years old. And if you had seen this country in its beauty, as I have, you would have called it most beautiful, with its undulating prairies and its natural groves. As I rode out on my wagon, for we had no buggies then, I thought I had never beheld a country so attractive to the eye. It was covered with the most delightful blossoms as far as one could see; the husbandman had not disturbed them, and they were allowed to grow in their native purity. Everywhere we beheld the works of God in nature. You could travel for forty miles in any direction without meeting a person or finding a dwelling house. You could see the deer whipping out of the groves and the red men riding over the prairies. I never saw an Indian traveling on foot in this country—he was always mounted on his pony. I have been in France and in Germany, but I was raised in England; but I have never seen anything in those countries that equaled the beauty of this western prairie. It is true there were bad creeks and sloughs and no bridges, but we did not need many bridges. The people living along the Iroquois were courageous and did not fear wading streams any more

than did Long John when he pulled his horse out of Sugar creek.

I never hauled my grain to Chicago; I could do better with it at home. I have seen men forty and fifty miles below here hauling flour and pork to Chicago, and when they got stuck in the Beaver sloughs they would manage to pull out again; it seemed to make no difference to them. They were energetic men who immigrated to this country and they were able to meet conditions. I do not know of a man—no, not one—that came to this country in that day and used any kind of industry, but made a good living, a good farm and had plenty. This proved that the land had something more to offer than flowers. There was something in the soil that a man could see. I remember when the first settlers came up from the Wabash, there was not a human being nor a house to be seen on these prairies. Just think what a change in so short a time.

I am here today as fresh as I ever was in my life. I have never had an ache nor a pain in my life, and I have lived to be this old in this country without them. I was married when I was young and when I came here I thought I had found the prettiest country I had ever seen, and I thought I had brought with me the prettiest woman I

ever knew. I was happy Tom then and I have been happy Tom ever since.

We had plenty of venison and fish, and most of the time plenty of pork and beef. We had a good soil and all we had to do was to work it. I thought this country was the garden spot of the world, and I still think so.

We had plenty of Indians as neighbors, ten to one white neighbor. I never saw an Indian who tried to disturb anything. If he wanted a favor he would come and ask for it humbly and he never came to my house in vain. I never lived by better neighbors.

There are a great many old settlers here who had to plow for a number of years with wooden plows. The first iron plow I ever saw in this county was Peacock's, made in Cincinnati and brought to the Wabash. Soon after they began to come into the county fast.

We did not have the facilities for an education then that we now have. The old pioneers came together and cut logs and built a school house, and each of us subscribed so much a scholar, and in that way we educated our children. Then we had but few wants and very little money.

When I lived up at Pilot Grove there were a few of us scattered around there, and we would

see each other during the week, and one would say, "Tom, don't you want to go to Bunkum Saturday?" And then somebody would pass the word around, and we would take a team and all come to Bunkum. It looked like a good ways to come to a store, but it was not half as far then as it is now. God bless Charley Sherman, the store keeper. Our purses were light, but we could always get our money's worth here in Bunkum.

We had no churches, but contrived means to have the word of God preached. Although I did not belong to church, I took as much interest as any of them. I had a Methodist wife. We would see some preacher, and then give out an appointment. We had preaching in our private houses, and it did us and our children as much good as if we had had a ten thousand dollar church. We had as fine a preacher as ever was. He lived up by the North Timber and his name was Waters. After his sermon he would give out his appointment for the next time at some one of the houses. He would say, "I am going to preach next Sabbath, if it is not a good coon day." Now, you may think he was a coon-hunter; that was not the case, but he knew if it was a good coon day his congregation would be tolerably slim. As I told



you, my wife was a Methodist, and when we had what we called a big meeting I would generally invite the preacher home with me. Once there were two of them at our house, and one of them called me "Brother Barker." I said, "'Brother-in-law,' if you please." I was an admirer of their sister, but was not their brother.

There was a friendship existing among these old settlers. I never had a bad neighbor that I know of. Before I moved out here with my family, I came alone and raised a crop. I brought two or three barrels of flour; I had some two or three hundred bushels of corn here, and had built me a house, but had not cut out any door. That flour and corn and everything stayed there all winter while I was away without being disturbed. These were the sort of people who made the first settlement along the Iroquois, and were they not the right kind to start the settling of a new country? I ask how long would three or four barrels of flour stay in a house now all winter and be left alone as this was? I want to show you the golden color of those who lived and died by me, and have now passed away.

When I look back over the past thirty-five years, and think of the acquaintances I had up and down this river, who have passed away, it

makes me feel sad. I could tell you all about them, for I have a good memory, and I could name all the families that have settled on this river. They were all good people. Some of them fell in the morning, some fell at noon and others fell later in the day. There are those here today who remember, when they settled on the river, how thick those mammoth trees were; the poplar, oak, walnut, were growing in the thickest clusters, but they too have passed away. The husbandman's ax has felled a great many of them, and some of them have died, but there is a younger growth coming up to take their places. So with the human family, our grand-fathers and fathers are passing away, but there is a younger growth coming to take their places, that looks as beautiful to me as did this country when I first saw it.

#### Pioneer Story by Hiram Vennum

Hiram Vennum, a prominent citizen of the county and one of the first settlers, related the story of his early experience, which was one of real hardship. He said:

My friends, when I see so many old and familiar faces around me whom I am so glad to see, it really makes me feel young. I left Pennsylvania in September, 1834, for Illinois. I was

run down in health and was told that I could not stand to travel one day. At night I went to bed and in the morning I was better. I gained in health every day from that time until I arrived here, about one month later.

It was a new country then. We could not get feed even for our horses. We had to haul all our feed and our food stuff from the Wabash. The next year after we came we were taken sick. I will say this for the young folks, to show them what we had to endure when we first came. Ten of us lived in a log cabin fourteen feet square, and I have seen all of them down on the floor sick at one time. We thought that disagreeable times then—it made me think of old Pennsylvania. The reason we stayed here was because we could not get away, and you need not thank us for staying. The next year we did not have a cent of money, and then the crash of 1837 coming on left us with nothing. I made the farm I now live on with my own hands, and I am there yet because I could not get anybody to buy it. I ask my young friends how they would like to live in a log cabin only fourteen feet square. You think you could not do it; but you could stand it, for it has been done. You know nothing about hard times. Then we did not see five dollars in money

once a year. I hauled pork to Chicago and sold it for one dollar a hundred and thanked the man for buying it. When you think of what we had to go through, you need not fear but you can make a living now. There was no such thing as hiring a hand—we had to do our own work ourselves. We used to drive a good many hogs to Chicago. I have waded the Kankakee river, some five or six times, when the slush and ice were running. I have crossed those sloughs until ten o'clock in the night before I stopped. You may think you could not do that, but you could if you had to.

#### Pioneer Story by Judge S. R. Moore

Judge S. R. Moore, many years a prominent lawyer of Kankakee and an early settler, is still active. No man has a wider acquaintance in both counties than the judge. He said:

I have had the pleasure of addressing a great many audiences in my life time, but none so large as this. I have the pleasure to speak on this occasion for Mr. Vasseur, who made a permanent home in Iroquois and Kankakee counties since 1822 to the present time. He has never worn glasses and has never had ill health. He came here in 1822 to make a home in this beautiful

prairie country. He was in the employ of the North-western Fur Co. for eleven years, and made his home in the ancient and venerable town of Bunkum. In 1832 he came and settled in Bourbonnais Grove. Mr. Vasseur desires me to thank you for your kindness and to say God bless you, that you may live long and enjoy the benefits of this beautiful county.

I think about 1844 or '45 I became familiar with the name of Bunkum; I don't know how to spell it. I was acquainted with the meaning of buncombe in general and buncombe in law, but I never knew the meaning of Bunkum in Illinois.

My father came to Cincinnati in 1794. He left Ireland four years before that. He made his way to Pittsburgh; there they made a small raft and floated down to Cincinnati, and there was but one white man in all that country at that time. Daniel Boone was then in Kentucky. At that time matches were unknown—that is the Lucifer matches; some love matches were made in Kankakee. Mowing machines and threshing machines were unknown, and when they came, people thought they would be deprived of their labor and they could not live. When they were going to build steam cars and do away with the stage coach, there would be no employment left.

Cutting grain with the sickle and plowing with the wooden plow—what a wonderful transformation there has been.

Mr. Messer will tell you what Iroquois county was from 1830 up to 1879—from nothing to twenty-five million dollars. Such is the history of every county in northern Illinois. He will tell you that two hundred years ago a trader came down the Kankakee river, and then came up the Iroquois river to where now stands the ancient town of Middleport. If you will go to the Kankakee river you will find what is called Grape Island there, and you will find a quality of grapes that cannot be found anywhere else on the American continent. They sprang undoubtedly from seeds dropped there over two hundred years ago, and took root and grew, and hundreds of people go there and gather grapes in the proper season.

#### The Story by Moses H. Messer

The story of the Indian trails of the county was perhaps never better told, and certainly by no better authority than Moses H. Messer, a surveyor, and an early settler. Mr. Messer said:

Were I called upon to write the history of Iroquois county I would divide it into three parts. The first division would commence with the first

permanent settlement of the white man, dating back to 1829. The second would commence with the introduction of the first railroad; this I would bring up to date. The third period would begin with 1829 and go back two hundred years.

There were three separate and distinct places of early settlement. The first was at this place in 1829, the second was at Milford a year later; the third settlement was on Spring creek, in the west part of the county, two or three years later. I propose to go back to the time when Gurdon S. Hubbard located in this county, the winter of 1821-22. He found no white men here. He came in a boat from Mackinac to Chicago, boated up the Chicago river and crossed the portage to the Desplaines, down the Desplaines to the mouth of the Kankakee, then up the Kankakee to the Iroquois, and then he followed this river up to what is now called Old Middleport. There he made his first location, and built him a house and a fur press. Mr. Hubbard stated to parties that he located there by order of the North American Fur Company, and when his contract with them expired he saw fit to move to this place (Iroquois). A quarter of a mile north of here can be pointed out the location of his cabin; a quarter

of a mile east of it was the location of his trading post.

I shall now describe as well as I can the Indian trails that then existed in this county. It is not certain that their location at some points is fully determined, but I shall give them the best I can. There was a trail commencing at Mr. Hubbard's trading post here, leading down the north side of the river along the timber to the mouth of Sugar creek, where it crossed the Iroquois. At that point there were two trails. One led southwest past Jefferson's point, crossing Spring creek it filed along the timber to Onarga (my house stands right on that trail), to Kickapoo Grove, now Oliver's Grove. The other branch went down west and south to the farm owned by Benjamin F. Masters; crossed Sugar creek, and from there it led away down across the prairie to Danville. There was another trail which started from Hubbard's place here and crossed the river near the Iroquois bridge. In a short distance it divided into three branches; one went to LaFayette, one to Milford, and the third to the mouth of Sugar creek. There was a crossing at the old town of Texas. There was a trail leading from here north to a ford on the upper part of Beaver creek, in this county. This ford was called the Shobear



crossing. Three or four miles from the trading post a branch turned northwest and crossed the Kankakee at Aroma. The old Buck-Horn tavern was on this trail. An Indian trail also extended from the mouth of Sugar creek down the Iroquois on the east side. From the best information that I have been able to get, these were the original trails the Indians had here in 1822.

When Mr. Hubbard came it was convenient for him to use these trails for communication. The more important of the trails from Danville north was called Hubbard's trail to Chicago. There was another trail in the western part of the county which was not made by the Indians. It was called Butterfield's. It came from Bicknels Point to Pigeon Grove, to Del Rey, and struck the Iroquois at Plato, and then to the Kankakee river, below that city. The first settlers on Spring creek came by this route.

There was a bit of Indian war in this county. In 1832 when Black Hawk was on the warpath, several of the families at Bunkum and Milford went to the Wabash for safety; others came to Hubbard's, where there were several hundred Pottawatomies spending the summer. These Indians were all peaceable and friendly.

The house of John Hoagland, about one-half

mile north of Jessie Eastburns, was entered by some stray Indians of Black Hawk's forces, and some slight depredations committed. George Courtright (who is now living in Watseka) and Henry Enslin discovered it and hastening to the post gave the alarm. They quickly gathered up a force of about twenty Pottawatomies and started in pursuit. The trail was struck at the ford where Texas now is, and was followed northwest to the neighborhood of Tom Yates. At this point the fleeing party separated. One trail was followed to the mouth of Pike Creek and across the Iroquois. Here the pursuers camped for the night. The next day they followed up the river and up Spring creek and camped the second night in an Indian sugar camp at Del Rey. On the following day they struck the Indian trail from Sugar creek from Jefferson's Point to Oliver's Grove, and followed it back to their homes.

This county from 1822 to 1829 had no white people in it except Hubbard and one or two in his employ. He had with him some half breed Frenchmen and some Indians he used as laborers. As an agricultural country at that time it had no value; there was not a tiller of the soil in it. What have we today? We have one hundred and forty miles of railroad; we are fastened to Indiana on

the east by two lines; on the north and south by two lines and also to the west. We have one hundred and forty miles of telegraph lines, upon which can be sent four messages at one time, two each way. And we have a great deal besides. We have at least seventeen hundred miles of high-ways. We have also two hundred school houses, with over two hundred teachers employed from six to eight months in the year. We have one Seminary of Learning and one Conservatory of Music and several graded schools whose importance is but a little ways removed from the seminary. There are over fifty churches and places for public worship, and numerous Sunday schools each Sabbath. See the advancement we have made. Compare fifty years ago with the present, commencing with a value at nothing, and now we have a value in property of twenty-five millions of dollars, which is a very conservative estimate. See what Civilization has wrought in fifty years. It is well for us to celebrate our anniversaries; it is well for us to gather as we are today and interchange thoughts and talk over these affairs and have a general good time. From the present time to the first settlement in 1829, we have a period of fifty years, and this is the fiftieth anniversary that we are here to celebrate.

It is only a few years ago since the United States had an anniversary, the Centennial. Now I want to see if we can not have this a double Centennial for "Old Iroquois."

The first ship that ever plowed the waters of the Great Lakes was the Griffin, built by La Salle, a few miles above Niagara Falls, in 1679.

On the 27th day of August this sixty-ton ship reached the Mission Station at Mackinac. After a short stay, sails were again spread and Green Bay soon was reached. A cargo of furs was secured and the Griffin set out for Niagara Falls. Seventeen men remained with LaSalle. On the 19th of September, with four heavily laden canoes, they left the mouth of the bay and turned south along the shore of the lake, which was followed to the mouth of the St. Joseph river in Michigan, where he stopped thirty-three days, waiting for Lieutenant Tonti, who had been left at Mackinac and was to meet his comrades at this place. At last he came with a number of men. LaSalle started up the river with thirty-three men in eight canoes. At South Bend a portage of six miles was made to the headwaters of the Kankakee river, down which they paddled their canoes. On the fourth day of January, 1680, the fleet entered Peoria lake, at the south end of which he

built a fort and commenced to construct a ship of about thirty tons burden, with which to explore the Mississippi as soon as the season would permit. LaSalle, with his two Frenchmen and his faithful Mohegan Indian, on the second day of March started for Montreal. The lake and river were not yet clear of ice and when their canoe could not be floated it was dragged along the shore on a sled. In this way they reached a point near Joliet, hid their canoe in the brush and footed the rest of the way to Fort Miami at the mouth of the St. Joe. The next day they proceeded on foot across Michigan, crossed the Detroit river and walked to Niagara Falls, where they arrived nearer dead than alive. The indomitable leader at once left for Montreal.

Talk of the great feats of travel in Africa by Stanley, backed by the wealth of nations giving him all the conveniences of modern times, and wonder at his success. Then compare his efforts with that simple trip made on foot from Peoria lake to Niagara Falls in winter and early spring, and Stanley's efforts are as nothing by the side of this trip made through our own country two hundred years ago.

I hold in my hand a part of a map made in 1684 from records and maps kept by LaSalle

and others of the country they had explored. On this map is the south end of Lake Michigan, Illinois river, Spoon river, Sangamon, Vermilion, Desplaines, Fox, Chicago, Calumet, Kankakee and Iroquois. The Iroquois river is correctly delineated as far south as Watseka, where it turns east. While I am not able to prove that it was ascended as far as that point by the French traders two hundred years ago, I believe it was. While Lewis Cass was in France about fifty years ago, he took much pains to gain a knowledge of the early settlement of Detroit. He employed as clerk, Mr. Margry, a young French scholar. Having gained permission to examine old records, the work was commenced, and Margry has continued the labor up to this date.

The information thus gained was deemed of so much importance that Congress asked of the French government permission to copy all the records pertaining to the early French settlement in America. Margry has been employed several years, hunting up and transcribing old manuscripts for the work. About two years since three large volumes were issued from the French press, and there are more to be issued. They are exact copies of the original documents and throw a flood of light on this interesting subject. There

are several hundred copies of this work in Washington, but so far I have not been able to procure one. If I did, somebody might be able to translate it for me, and the proof sought for be found. However, we do know that the French were sufficiently near this town in 1679 to call this Old Settlers' Reunion a double centennial.

### Pioneers in Attendance

The following table presents the names of the venerable pioneers in attendance at this meeting, their residence and age at that date (1879), the date of their arrival in this part of the country, and the state from which they came. It will be observed that the greater number came prior to 1845, and some as early as 1820. This list does not include the pioneer women, whose names were unfortunately omitted from the list:

Name	Residence	Age	Arrival	From
Hon. Micajah Stanley,	Watseka.	69	1839	Ohio
G. Courtright,	Watseka.....	69	1830	Indiana
F. Fagan,	Watseka.....	57	1849	Indiana
W. S. Moore,	Watseka.....	67	1831	Ohio
David Cass,	Watseka.....	52	1849	Ohio
H. W. Hedger,	Watseka.....	60	1853	New York
S. Hetfield,	Watseka.....	58	1850	Illinois
John L. Donovan,	Watseka.....	54	1848	Kentucky
S. C. Taylor,	Watseka.....	54	1849	
John Reader,	Watseka.....	60	1854	England
John Fry,	Watseka.....	74	1834	Ohio

Name	Residence	Age	Arrival	From
J. M. Murray, Watseka.....	65	1835		Indiana
J. Moore, Watseka.....	75	1831		Ohio
R. Adsit, Watseka.....	71	1853		New York
James Hoagland, Iroquois.....	61	1845		Ohio
Putnam Gaffield, Iroquois.....	68	1857		Ohio
H. D. Strickler, Iroquois.....	84	1835		Ohio
W. Lander, Iroquois.....	78	1844		Ohio
William Dunning, Iroquois.....	64	1834		New York
James Harding, Iroquois.....	63	1843		Ohio
John Wagner, Iroquois.....	63	1838		Ohio
Gess Markley, Iroquois.....	59	1855		Ohio
S. R. Caggatt.....	58	1845		Pennsylvania
Anderson Tyler, Iroquois.....	59	1847		Indiana
Thomas Markley, Iroquois.....	50	1851		Ohio
Isaac Markley, Iroquois.....	63	1845		Ohio
Elijah Fry, Iroquois.....	62	1844		Ohio
Elijah Karr, Iroquois.....	56	1835		Ohio
J. Williams, Iroquois.....	53	1856		Kentucky
A. Sword, Iroquois.....	64	1855		Scotland
Abram Coughneur, Iroquois.....	69	1836		Ohio
Samuel Warrick, Iroquois.....	68	1853		Ohio
James Whiteman, Iroquois.....	64	1839		Ohio
Charles Hoagland, Iroquois.....	73	1836		Ohio
William Young, Iroquois.....		1853		New York
Leonard Hogle, Iroquois.....	72	1837		Ohio
Neighbor Dean, Iroquois.....	72	1828		Virginia
Jackson Torbet, Iroquois.....	76	1847		Ohio
Robert Caldwell, Sheldon.....	48	1852		Ohio
J. W. Murray, Sheldon.....	47	1836		Ohio
S. D. Fry, Sheldon.....	48	1836		Ohio
William Shortridge, Sheldon....	45	1859		Indiana
W. Atwood, Sheldon.....	61	1844		New York
J. C. Switzer, Sheldon.....	53	1828		Ohio
Molby Potter, Sheldon.....	52	1852		New York
Isaac Thomas, Sheldon.....	52	1835		Virginia
David Gay, Sheldon.....	66	1852		Ohio
J. Marlay, Sheldon.....	58	1844		Germany



Name	Residence	Age	Arrival	From
E. Burchchim, Kankakee.....		57	1838	New York
D. VanMeter, Kankakee.....		70	1845	Ohio
J. Flagole, Kankakee.....		65	1834	Canada
Noel Vasseur, Kankakee.....		82	1821	Canada
J. Yongar, Kankakee.....		84	1842	Connecticut
R. Nichols, Kankakee.....		67	1832	Pennsylvania
A. Webster, Kankakee.....		67	1845	New York
T. N. Pangburn, Onarga.....		73	1837	Ohio
R. D. Pangburn, Onarga.....		66	1837	New York
M. H. Messer, Onarga.....		50	1855	Mass.
James Padgett, Newton Co.....		55	1852	Indiana
Joseph Law, Newton Co.....		52	1830	Ohio
Henry Rider, Newton Co.....		63	1836	Ohio
William Best, Newton Co.....		57	1857	Ohio
J. Mires, Newton Co.....		44	1837	Indiana
W. Littlejohn, Newton Co.....		53	1856	Ohio
P. H. Hunter, Newton Co.....		79	1861	Maine
W. Sallee, Newton Co.....		59	1855	Ohio
T. Barker, Beaver Tp.....		66	1831	England
J. L. Perrigo, Beaver Tp.....		70	1860	New Jersey
F. Moore, Beaver Tp.....		73	1831	Ohio
F. Elijah, Morocco.....		58	1835	New York
D. M. Pulver, Morocco.....		50	1830	New York
L. Sladdard, Momence.....		71	1842	Canada
Ben Stearman, Momence.....		74	1839	Virginia
S. L. Sparling, Jasper Co.....		70	1836	New York
C. Wadley, Waldron.....		53	1828	New York
J. Macalay, Tucker.....		54	1856	Pennsylvania
Potter Austin, Wellington.....		51	1852	New York
J. L. Bailey, Belmont.....		59	1854	Indiana
W. H. Henry, Indiana.....		52	1830	
Hiram Vennum, Milford.....		65	1834	Pennsylvania
William Best, Indiana.....		57	1837	Ohio
W. Harritt, Indiana.....		56	1848	Indiana

### Home Coming

Another notable event in the history of Iroquois was a Home-coming, which was held in Dunning Park July 3 and 4, 1914. The affair was well advertised and the plan well worked out, and an excellent program was provided. The attendance was large beyond all expectations. A conservative estimate placed the crowd the second day at twelve thousand. The attendance on the first day was not so large. R. W. Brown was president and H. B. Francis secretary of the association. R. F. Karr was moderator. The program both days presented attractive features. Men of national reputation delivered addresses. George Ade, the playwright and noted author, whose parents were old settlers of Iroquois, was present and spoke; also United States Senator L. Y. Sherman of Illinois delivered an address. This is said to have been the largest gathering ever assembled in the county, and, like the Old Settlers' Reunion held in the same place thirty-five years before, the occasion of the only visit of many aged people to scenes of their early lives.

No small part of the great success of this home-coming was due to the generous publicity given by the Iroquois County Times-Democrat. This paper also devoted an entire page to a report of

the meeting, including the address by George Ade, which is here presented.

The following address by George Ade, delivered on this occasion, was not only a glowing tribute to the community, but a happy expression of that indescribable emotion which stirs the soul of every man who, after a long absence, returns to the scenes of his early childhood. He said:

Ladies and Gentlemen: I feel that I have a right to come here and celebrate today because my father was an early resident of this town. He was always greatly interested in Bunkum. As far back as I can remember, when our family first put on style with a two-seated carriage, our favorite Sunday drive was across the prairie and through the timber from Kentland to Bunkum. I have a second excuse for being here. Although born in Indiana, I was, for nearly fifteen years, a resident of Illinois. A friend of mine said once that I was a Hoosier by birth but a Sucker by instinct. At least I have enough of a neighborly interest to come here today, because I believe we should be loyal to our old homes and our old friends.

The gentlemen who put my name on the bills did not say whether I was expected to go up in a balloon and make a parachute drop or engage in

a wrestling match with one of the large husky blacksmiths from Chicago. As I have the privilege of choosing my own stunt, I have decided that I will merely stand up here for a few minutes and exhibit myself and then retire in favor of those who have more lung-power and larger vocabularies.

When a man starts in to say something, I think it is a grand idea for him to talk about the things that he knows something about.

In the last twenty years I have been a somewhat restless traveler. I have had what the Germans call the wanderlust. I didn't want to remain more than twenty minutes in one spot. For a year or two I have been more content to settle down and stay at home for at least a week at a stretch, which is probably a sign that I am growing old. However, before I calmed down, I made several trips to Europe, extending my travels to include Turkey and up the Nile into Africa. I went down to look at the Panama Canal four times while it was being excavated, visiting the West Indies and the edge of South America on the same cruises. I have been to the Philippine Islands and have visited China and Japan each three times. Five years ago I went around the world, and moved among the swarming popula-

tions of Ceylon, India, Burmah, Java and those great Malay colonies between India and China. It is not my desire to blow about my travels, but to let you know that I have been to nearly all of the places that keep open, and, unless I have had my eyes closed, I should know something as to the relative advantages enjoyed by a man living on the banks of the Iroquois in this county, on the banks of the Thames in England, the Rhine in Germany, the Tiber in Italy, the Nile in Egypt and the Yangtse in China. Whenever I come home after a few weeks or a few months under other flags I am always newly impressed and struck with wonder to think that I am living in the one region on the whole globe where actual poverty is almost unknown. Right here, where we are living, is the only part of the inhabited earth in which the farmer, the man who tills the fields, who gets out and buckles down to the primitive proposition of wrestling wealth from the soil, rides about in a Ford car, has a piano or a talking machine in the front room and a cream separator in the kitchen, a balance in the bank and meat on the table. The average every-day man, right here in our neighborhood, is better fed, better clothed and better housed than any other plain citizen in any other country.

.

Many of the older countries are much more attractive as scenery. They look better from a car window to the man passing through. The fields are small and cultivated like gardens and the yield per acre is much larger than it is with us. The roads are as smooth as boulevards. The grass plats and hedges on either side are as trim and neat as those of Lincoln Park. There is less litter and waste around the farm-houses and out-buildings. In fact, the humble agriculturist of Europe has set several good examples to the American farmer; but, thanks to the fact that we have a new country and our population has not yet congested, each man finds elbow room here in the Mississippi valley and the new wealth can be so divided each year that even the man with the hoe can get in all of the necessities and some of the luxuries—such as moving pictures, although many people now regard them as necessities.

We are singularly blessed here in the corn belt. Let us hope that the farmers may continue to live in comfortable houses and drive their Ford cars and get measured for their clothes instead of buying them off the shelf.

When we have 200,000,000 people in the United States and no more acres to divide among them than at present, we will have new problems of

management to take up and solve. No doubt they will be solved by the campaign orators when the proper time comes. In the meantime, permit me to suggest that we should rejoice because we have been favored and we should lay all of our plans so that the plain, every-day, stump-pulling and corn-plowing citizen may continue to have a look-in at the good things of this life.

### Licensed Saloons

When Iroquois was first incorporated under village organization, its inhabitants immediately divided into two parties—the wet and the dry—between which there was no compromise. The licensed saloon became not only the most important issue, but the only issue. Candidates for the village offices were nominated and elected or defeated with reference to their attitude upon this question. No other qualification was considered. The stock arguments in favor of the saloon were repeated in each succeeding campaign until they were believed by those who used them. At first the wets had the slight advantage in numbers, and the dries in point of influence. The saloons were voted in one year only to be voted out the next. Thus the pendulum swung back and forth between the wets and the dries for

twenty years, each time swinging a little stronger to the dries, until a decision was returned from the ballot box so decisive that it was accepted by both sides as final. The village saw the hand-writing on the wall and did not wait for the emphatic decision made by the township under township option several years later. While the saloon has asserted a baneful influence upon society and politics in Iroquois as well as elsewhere, it has also been a schoolmaster, teaching the people by concrete example, the important lesson that licensing an evil in order to collect a revenue from the foibles and vices of the people is a poor method of building up a community in its civic pride or its public improvements.

### Inventive Genius

Iroquois has not been without its citizens of inventive genius. The self-binder, which came into general use and has been a boon to the farmer as a labor-saving machine, was first invented by Daniel Ayers, an early resident of Iroquois. He failed to receive any profit from his patent. The machine was constructed to use wire to tie the sheaf instead of twine. Wire was not in favor. A man named Appleby saw this point and invented the knotter, which used twine instead of



wire. But he borrowed the original idea of a self-binder from Ayers.

Samuel F. Nosker, an old resident, after many years of close application, succeeded in inventing a seed-drill attachment which also came into general use, but was afterwards appropriated by an Ohio firm. Nosker, like his predecessor, was unfortunate in receiving no remuneration for his genius.

James Humphreys spent several years of his life in perfecting his invention of a tile and sewerage ditching machine. He finally disposed of his patents to his son, Walter G., who made valuable improvements upon which he has secured patents. Being possessed of business ability, as well as inventive genius, he has kept control of his patents and is now operating a large number of these machines in the western states. Mr. Humphreys, who has made his home in Iroquois all his life, manufactures his own machines, and has achieved great success.

### Influential Citizens

Every town has its prominent characters, who live and die in the community and during their active lives shape and mould its social and political life and whose influence lives after them.

Iroquois has been no exception to this rule. A number of these characters of an early date will be noticed in connection with the township affairs. But a few were more closely associated with the life of the village and will be mentioned in connection with its history.

Walter B. Simonds was a resident of Iroquois for twenty years and died in 1891. He was supervisor, justice of the peace and town clerk, holding one or more of these offices most of the time. He had political aspirations and at one time was a candidate for the legislature. He was a man of generous impulses and possessed a wonderful knowledge of history and current events.

David H. Ely, who died in Iroquois in 1907, had been a resident of the town for forty-eight years. He was a veteran of the civil war and was engaged in the lumber business more than thirty years of his active life. He was repeatedly elected to some village office and that of justice of the peace. He was well known in the township for his mechanical ingenuity and his literary attainments.

Dr. A. T. Crozier will long be remembered by the people of Iroquois, a practicing physician of great local popularity. He came to the village in 1864 and died in 1891. He was an accomplished

scholar and gave much of his time to charity. His exceptionally affable disposition won a host of friends.

Peter V. Frownfelter and Mrs. M. Erasta, his wife, came to Iroquois early in the 40's. Mr. Frownfelter died in 1886, Mrs. Frownfelter in 1899. They were among the most prominent of the early settlers. They held at different times the offices of tax collector, township treasurer and postmaster, and were leaders in the social affairs of the community in an early day. Their home was often open to the poor who were in need of shelter or food.

### Young Men's Opportunity

Iroquois has given to the world many examples of the wonderful possibilities which this country offers to the young men of pep and energy, examples which contain an inspiration to the boy with an ambition to contribute to the world's happiness and progress.

Charles Sherman, Dr. Fowler, John L. Donovan, William Smith, Judge Chamberlain and Judge Blades in an early day were residents of Iroquois, where as young men they laid the foundation of their future success.

In subsequent years many new examples have

appeared. Charles Partridge, a poor boy in Iroquois, with a kit of carpenter's tools and enough money saved up to buy a railroad ticket, located in the city of Omaha. He began at the bottom,



Mrs. Cora (Fry) Brown of Iroquois, a granddaughter and possibly the only living descendant of Benjamin Fry, the first permanent settler of Concord.

but kept climbing until he became one of the leading contractors and builders of that city. William Brown, who spent his boyhood days in Iroquois, went to Chicago, worked his way through law school and is now recognized as a lawyer of

prominence and ability in that city. Walter G. Humphreys, already mentioned in connection with his invention, was the son of poor parents living in Iroquois. He began his active career as a country school teacher. A tireless worker, he developed into a man of executive ability and is now conducting an extensive business of his own in the western states, with headquarters at Omaha. His original investment was character and application. William Dale, now a resident of Kankakee, began his career in Iroquois as a day laborer. His assets consisted of a tile spade, a level head and two willing hands. He is now prominent in financial circles and controls large holdings in Concord township and elsewhere.

This list might be extended, but these examples will suffice to impress the point upon the young man of Iroquois, that the world invites him to a wider field of usefulness, and it is up to him to accept or decline the invitation. Neither poverty nor obscurity can shackle the growth of the young man with character and ambition who is willing to work. Efficiency will come with effort. No matter how crowded at the base, there is plenty of room at the top.

---

**Branches of Business**

The business interests of Iroquois are well represented in the following lines:

A general merchandise store, conducted by S. M. Clarke.

A grocery store, conducted by F. E. Martin.

Two restaurants, one by C. P. Salkeld, one by R. B. Brown.

One market, conducted by Thomas Smith.

One harness and shoe store, by N. W. Tyler.

One implement store, conducted by Robert Barr.

One hardware store, conducted by Spitler Bros. Co.

One telephone exchange, conducted by W. S. Fish.

One garage, conducted by Mattox Bros.

One banking house, conducted by F. E. Martin.

One blacksmith shop, by Bert Lorison.

One fire insurance agency, by John H. Francis.

One live stock market, by Karr and Hook.

One barber shop, by F. A. Wiltshire.

One lumber yard, by Salem Ely.

Two grain and coal companies, the Risser and Dale Elevator, conducted by A. E. Dale, and the Farmers' Elevator, conducted by F. W. Kee.

The health of the community is in the hands of two capable physicians—Dr. Chas. E. Peel and Dr. J. T. Rea. Its spiritual welfare is in the care of Rev. A. A. Belyea, pastor of the M. E. Church.

Iroquois has a well equipped post office, with Clem H. Hughs as postmaster. It has no manufacturing industries.

### Fraternal Societies

Iroquois is well represented in fraternal societies. The oldest of these is O. H. Miner Lodge 506, A. F. and A. M., organized in 1866. This society is perhaps the strongest and has a present membership of about seventy.

River Lodge 586, I. O. O. F., was instituted twenty years later. The Eastern Star, Rebeccas, Modern Woodmen, Royal Neighbors, and the Red Cross have been established at different times since. The Red Cross, which is now active in work connected with the present war, was the latest to be organized. These societies have been active in their work for the betterment of their individual membership and the community.

### Iroquois' Development

The village in recent years has made decided advancement as a residence town. Its homes have been greatly improved and better dwellings have been erected in place of the former ones.



Clem H. Hughes, Iroquois Postmaster.

Modern equipment has been installed in many of them. Its streets and public walks have received better attention and are kept in the best condition. The civic pride of its inhabitants has become more manifested.



As a business town it has also shown improvement on the whole. Its banking facilities are much better than formerly. Several substantial public buildings have been added within recent years. It has grown as a lumber market. Perhaps its greatest advance has been made as a grain market. Its grain elevators are doing an immense business which is on the increase.

In population and in other branches it has more than held its own. Like other small towns, similarly situated, it has had to contend with changing commercial conditions which have been detrimental to the village in certain branches of trade. The mail order house, the rural delivery, the parcel-post and other factors have a tendency to divert trade to the cities.

This adverse condition will continue until the small town merchant learns the art of co-operation and the art of buying and advertising. The remedy is within his grasp and some day he will awaken to the fact. Then Iroquois, in common with other small villages, will take on new life and new growth.

## HISTORY OF CONCORD TOWNSHIP

### Location

Concord township formerly included Sheldon township. The latter, however, was separated and placed under township organization in 1868. It is bounded on the north by Beaver township, on the east by the Indiana state line, on the south by Sheldon township and on the west by Middleport township. It comprises town twenty-seven north, range eleven west, and fractional town twenty-seven north, range ten west of the second principal meridian. These towns are numbered north from a given base line. It extends six miles north and south and nearly seven miles east and west. The fractional range of about three-fourths of a mile in width lying along the Indiana line is a part of this township. This accounts for its irregular dimensions. It contains thirty-six whole sections and six fractional sections, approximately 26,000 acres. A full section contains 640 acres. It was surveyed by the United States government as early as 1822, except range ten, which was surveyed in 1834. Although it had its definite boundary lines and was a definite political unit, it remained under the commission form of government until the year 1856.

## Organization

Concord township, although one of the first in the state to change its form of government, was



Peter B. Strickler, a veteran of the Civil War, Co. F, 155th Illinois Infantry, who enlisted from Concord township. Was born in Page County, Virginia in 1827. Settled in Concord Township in 1835 and will soon celebrate his ninety-second birthday. He is the oldest living resident of the township and perhaps of the county. He enjoys excellent health and is able to do a day's work on the farm. He attended the Iroquois County Fair the present year and had a jolly time with the boys.

not organized under township organization until the year 1856. For this purpose a meeting was held in April of that year by the resident voters.

The persons then elected to fill the different offices were: Jesse Eastburn, supervisor; Amos O. Whiteman, town clerk; Abram Hogle, assessor; P. V. Frownfelter, collector; Samuel Warrick, overseer of the poor; A. C. Mantor, Isaac M. Caldwell, and James H. Karr, highway commissioners.

### Prominent Men

With this election began the history of the township under its present form of government. These first officers were prominent in the affairs of the community at that time and continued their activity in its development for many years after. They were capable and faithful in the discharge of their official duty. Amos O. Whiteman at one time served as county surveyor and for a number of years as justice of the peace. Abram Hogle was also justice of the peace and supervisor. Samuel Warrick was also supervisor one term. James H. Karr served one term as sheriff of Iroquois county.

A list of the succeeding supervisors who were elected for one or more terms in this township, down to the present time, in the order of their respective terms of service, would include: A. J. Willard, James H. Karr, Abram Hogle, W. H.

McClain, J. B. Strickler, W. B. Simonds, John H. Karr, John Crouch, H. M. Whiteman, R. F. Karr, N. D. Pearce and Chas. E. Strand.



Benjamin Fry, the first permanent settler of Concord Township and of the county. Was the most widely known pioneer in Eastern Illinois. In an early day, on horseback, he hurried to Chicago to help defend that city, then a village, from a threatened attack of hostile Indians.

### Early Settlements

The first white men to locate in Concord township were Gurdon S. Hubbard and Noel Vasseur, Indian traders. Their object was not to establish a home but to traffic with the Indians. In the fall of 1822 Hubbard established a trading post just

across the road from the present residence of S. C. Salkeld, about one mile east of Iroquois. This building, made from hewn logs, remained intact until 1860, when it was torn down. In 1826 Hubbard pre-empted a piece of land just north of Iroquois, later known as the Wm. H. Dunning farm, now owned by Fred Miller and Judge Raymond. Hubbard cultivated a part of this land. This was the first tract of land put under cultivation in Iroquois county. Hubbard married an Indian woman whom he afterwards divorced. The widow then became the wife of Noel Vasseur, who later moved to Bourbonnais Grove, Illinois. Hubbard in 1834 moved to Chicago, where he remained until his death. Vasseur visited Iroquois in 1879 and delivered an address at an Old Settlers' reunion held in Dunning Park. Allen Baxter was in the employ of Hubbard, his wife being the first white woman to live in the township or in the county.

### Pioneer Settlers

As early as 1830 permanent settlements were begun in reality. Immigrants came to the new country with the idea to establish permanent homes and build up the country. Among the first pioneers to locate were John H. Miller and the

three Courtright brothers, Hezekiah Eastburn, Wm. Hanan, Elijah Newcombe, Benjamine Fry, James Crozier, Benjamin Thomas, John Hoagland and Mitchell Dunn. A. Pineo, Asa Gaffield and Henry Enslin were also among the first settlers. Dunn was the first sheriff of the county. Isaac Courtright was the first postmaster and the first justice of the peace. E. D. Boone was the first justice of the peace after Iroquois county was organized. Originally, Vermilion county included Iroquois county. The dividing line between Vermilion and Cook county was the Kankakee river. In 1833 Iroquois county was made a separate county. And in 1835 the county seat was located at Montgomery, where it remained for four years, when it was removed to Middleport.

### A New Country

These early settlers found a country entirely new, rich in virgin forest and level prairie, with wild game in abundance, untrodden except by the Red man—a land of most wonderful promise. Concord township was about three-fourths prairie and about one-fourth timber. It is well watered by the Iroquois river, which runs through it from east to the southwest, affording a most excellent

drainage. Along this stream on either side was a belt of heavy timber consisting of black walnut, white oak, bur oak, ash, hickory, elm and other varieties of valuable timber. Most of this has since yielded to the woodman's axe and been converted into fence rails, fence posts, saw logs, fuel, and at one time into log cabins. On either side of this timber belt is a continuous prairie whose soil is rich and highly productive. North of the river the surface is slightly undulating, while south of the river it is more level. It lies within the famous corn belt of Illinois and is well adapted for the raising of corn, oats, wheat, rye, clover, timothy and many other products of the soil.

### American Indian

These pioneers found the township already inhabited by the American Indian. These natives grouped in tribes and had their huts and wigwams and villages, and lived mostly by hunting and fishing. They lived close to nature and mostly out in the open. Their clothes were made from the skins of animals and their domestic utensils and their weapons used in hunting were the most crude and simple in type. They had no higher ideals and cared little for the comforts of.



civilization. There was a large settlement at Montgomery, where also was located an Indian cemetery. Evidences of the location of this cemetery are disclosed even to this day. Several Indian mounds within the township have not entirely disappeared. The largest of these is located on the Bush farm, south of the river and near the state line. The Indians of this section, however, remained friendly to the white man. In 1834 they were removed by order of the government to their reservations west of the Mississippi river.

### Period of Slow Development

The settlement and development of Concord township during the succeeding period of a quarter century was not rapid. There were a number of contributing causes.

First—There were no markets for the surplus products available. Chicago was the nearest, being seventy-six miles distant. Pack horses and ox teams afforded about the only means of transportation. No roads nor bridges, but swamps and sloughs and swollen rivers, which were impassable except during the dry season.

Second—these early settlers did not all foresee the wonderful possibilities in store for them nor

the unbounded resources that would come with the development of the country. Some became pessimistic and moved on further west. Most of them came from timbered countries, east and south, and had little faith in the productive capacity of prairie land. They settled along the timber belt with the belief that the wide stretch of prairie would always remain a waste desert. Had they emigrated from prairie countries they would have selected the prairie land here instead of that adjoining the timber belt. It was only natural that they should bring with them to the new country their prejudices as well as their dogs.

Third—During this period the new country was decidedly unhealthful. The germ theory of disease had not yet been discovered and the sources of attack were unknown even to medical science of that day. Ague, chills and fever, malarial fever, typhoid fever and other diseases incident to the new country, were alarmingly prevalent and often fatal. The medical profession were powerless to prevent their frequent attack nor to apply modern scientific methods of treatment. Artesian wells were not discovered until 1856, and the surface wells upon which the people relied with confidence for drinking water were shallow and often contaminated with ty-

phoid and other fatal disease germs. Flies, mosquitoes, rats and other germ-carriers were unsuspected. The mortality toll was high. These evils were surely bad enough, but still worse was the disposition to regard them as permanent.

### Milk Sickness

Another serious drawback to the early settlement of Concord township was a serious and often fatal malady known as milk-sickness. It appeared in the form of a malignant fever, attacking man and some of the lower animals, such as cattle, horses, sheep and dogs. It was confined to the timber lands and appeared only in the autumn of the year. The inhabitants became infected by using the meat, milk, butter or cheese of the infected cattle. The symptoms were headache, loss of appetite, fatigue, nausea, vomiting, thirst, constipation, a peculiar foul breath, then a typhoidal condition with coma or convulsions. The duration of the disease was from two or three days to as many weeks. The cause of this once dreaded disease has never been discovered. The supposition was that the cause existed in some poisonous herbs which grew along the timber lines late in the season and eaten by the cattle. Many experiments made by the early settlers lead

to this conclusion, but it remains a theory only, as the particular plant has never been identified. Happily for the community's health and welfare, it has long since disappeared.

### Natural Attractions

The new country was not without its attractions. The forest abounded with wild animals, such as opossums, raccoons, rabbits, squirrels, mink, muskrats and skunks, sometimes politely called timber pussies; while the Iroquois river yielded a plentiful supply of fish. The prairies swarmed with wild chickens, ducks, geese, quail, also foxes, wolves and deer. Hunting was not only a universal sport, but an ample and never-failing means of supplying the family with the choicest wild game. The early settler was a crack shot and seldom failed in his aim when his quarry came within range of his crude weapon. Wild fowl was so tame and plentiful that within an hour's time he could bag all he wanted to supply his present needs, and at no great distance from his own door. When in search of larger game, such as deer, men would go out in small parties in wagons and return well loaded. The fox and wolf chase was a popular diversion, so was 'coon hunting. The young men found an exciting time

in prowling the dense forest at night hunting the opossum and raccoon. Their dogs were trained to trail the fleeing animal and bring him to bay, generally up the tallest tree. The hunter would then build a fire under the tree, by the flare of which he was able to take unerring aim with his rifle. With the advance of population, however, wild game became more and more scarce, until in the 60's, when hunting as a source of food supply was discontinued.

### Barn Dance

The barn dance was also a popular recreation among the young people. They would assemble from long distances at some house or barn, coming on horse back, on sleds or wagons, as would best suit their fancy or the roads and season. The country fiddler was in great demand and was valued more for his physical endurance than for his art. These dances were generally free-for-all affairs, and were usually continued through the night. The prevailing spirit on these occasions was, "Let joy be unconfined when youth and beauty meet to chase the hours with flying feet." They were conducted with little or no reference to gracefulness or rhythm of motion. The idea seemed to prevail that they afforded the most ap-

propriate occasion to discharge a surplus stock of pent-up energy, and the young man who could kick the highest or stamp the floor with the greatest violence was the most admired by the ladies and the most envied by the men less efficient in the art.

### Spelling Schools

The old-fashioned spelling school was also one of the early attractions. This had its educational value as well as its social features. On these occasions two leaders were selected, usually from the best known spellers, who would take their places on either side of the building and alternately choose from those present until all were taken. As fast as chosen the participants would take their respective places along the wall on the side of their leader, where they would remain standing. The spelling book and the pronouncer having been selected, the exciting program of the evening would begin. The words would be announced in a loud clear tone of voice back and forth from one side of the room to the other, so that one side would be spelling against the other. Each participant was permitted to remain in line until he misspelled a word, when he would resume his seat. The last person to remain standing and

the side which he represented were awarded the honors of the contest—an honor that was cherished with an unconcealed feeling of pride.

### Worthy Citizenship

The hardships and privations and sacrifices incident to Concord township in its early history had their greatest value in the building up of a citizenship of sterling worth and persevering devotion, men of strong minds, of stout hearts and of husky, healthy bodies. The early settlers knew little of life's comforts or ease. They were home builders and community builders. The word failure had no place in their vocabulary. They were dedicated to the purpose of establishing homes and estates for their families. They were willing to make any sacrifice that posterity might be enriched. Their clothing and home comforts were the most scant, and yet they worked and toiled early and late and were content and happy. Their environment developed in them a sentiment of comradeship, of fraternity, of brotherly love, which made each one feel that he lived in God's country and among God's people. If one fell sick his neighbors were on hand uninvited to carry on his farm work. In the harvest season they cut his grain or husked out his corn. If in

winter they chopped and hauled his wood to his home. If the housewife became ill the women would gather and serve as nurses and housekeepers until her recovery. In the event of death, the neighbors assembled not only in sympathy to pay their last respects but to attend to every detail of the funeral and without charge. They kept no books on their neighbors, either financially or socially. It was a free exchange of help with no accounting of balances.

Such was the character of the early settlers of Concord township—the Hoaglands, the Frys, the Hogles, the Gaffields, the Pineos, the Carpenters, the Stricklers, the Willards, the Coughenours, the Gasses, the Browns, the Fultons, the Dorans, the Boones, the Youngs, the Warricks, the Court-rights, the Frounfelters, the Whitemans, Kings, Smiths, Fowlers, Lymans, Ayers, Manters, Nobles, Peters, Noskers, Ketchems, Shermans, Barrys, Browns, Blades, Bennetts, Chamberlains, Lawrences, Scritchfields, Shepherds, Gilberts, Ades, Markleys, Karrs, Hanans, Eastburns, Enslins, Caldwells, Croziers, Dunnings, Shermans, Donovans, Fowlers, Whites, Willisies, Hutzlers, Burroughs, Hollinsworths, Thomases, Kanes, Clarkes, Shrums, Lamberts, Richies, Pratts, Covins, Phelps, Websters, Crowls,



Goözys, Caldowells and others. It is true that a few were slackers and fell by the wayside, but a great majority had willing hands and constructive minds, and when opportunity knocked at their door they opened and welcomed.

### Opportunity

"Master of human destinies am I;  
Fame, love and fortune on my footsteps wait.  
Cities and fields I walk; I penetrate  
Deserts and seas remote, and passing by  
Hovel and mart and palace—soon or late—  
I knock unbidden, once at every gate:  
If sleeping, wake—if feasting, rise before  
I turn away—it is the hour of fate,  
And those who follow me reach every state  
Mortals desire, and conquer every foe  
Save death; but those who doubt or hesitate,  
Condemned to failure, penury and woe,  
Seek me in vain and uselessly implore.  
I answer not, and I return no more."

—*John J. Ingalls.*

### Early Schools

The early settler was prompt to recognize the value of education. He believed that all the children alike, and not a favored few of them, should be taught the rudiments of a common school education. His ideas were somewhat crude, but democratic and practicable. His ideal was comprehended by the three "R's," "redin', 'ritin', 'rith-

metic." To venture beyond these elements was liable to be more harmful than beneficial to the boy or girl. To carry out this idea public schools were established in the township as the population would warrant. Accordingly, as early as 1835, and within three years after the first permanent settlements were made, the first public school was started and "kept" in a log cabin on the hill on the north side of the river in a settlement then known as Bunkum. The statement has been handed down by the old settlers that the first two schoolmasters to preside in this primitive seat of learning were Hugh Newell and Benjamin Scott. The latter was also the first school treasurer and the second sheriff of the county. In 1840 the first school house was built in Concord township. It was located on the same hill and about the same spot. Later this was superseded by a more capacious structure which was found necessary to accommodate the larger enrollment of pupils. The school district at that time included practically the whole township, and in bleak winter the boys and girls, in defiance of sleet and blizzard and snow, would trudge their weary way for two or three miles and with ruddy cheeks and smiling faces and dinner pails, enter the little school house, ready for the day's lessons. This

building served the combined purpose of school house and church until 1875, when it was removed and a two-story brick was erected in its place. Again in 1900, this building being pronounced unsafe and inadequate, a four-room frame school house was built on the north side of the village of Iroquois.

As the population continued to increase, new districts were formed and new school houses were built, first along the timber lines, because the early settlements were made near the timber belt. As the settlements in time pushed out into the open prairie, the school houses followed, until in the early 50's, when the entire township was completely organized into eight school districts, generally of four sections each, and a corresponding number of school buildings were erected and as many schools maintained.

### School Houses

These school houses were small and were constructed on the same general plan. They were frame buildings and the material in them was made from the trees felled in the near-by forest, and were worked into lumber by hand. The plank floors, the clapboard roofs, the hewn siding, worked to bevel with an adz, the doors and win-

dows and the frame, were all the workmanship of the local carpenter. The ventilation was not only ample but unavoidable. The furniture within corresponded in roughness with the building itself.

A large box stove adorned the center of the room, around which the children huddled in winter with the idea of keeping warm. On a very cold day they were liable to freeze and roast at the same time according to the part of the body facing the stove. To obviate this discomfort they would shift their positions at frequent intervals until the whole body became warm. These stoves had a ravenous appetite for wood, which was out of all proportion to the amount of heat they would radiate. This difficulty was overcome by the willingness of the large boys to take turns in chopping the ricks of cord wood on the outside into suitable lengths. This supply of fuel had been chopped and hauled by the patrons of the school.

The seats consisted of long benches made of slabs. A slab in this connection means the first slice from a log. The only tools necessarily used in the manufacture of this important article of furniture were an auger and an ax. The pioneer was expert in the use of both. The operation was not complicated. Four holes bored into the slab at the corners and four wooden pins of even

lengths driven into them tightly and the finished product was ready for installment. In rare cases, however, when an extra fine job was demanded, the adz was used to give the finishing touches.

These benches were arranged in long rows, leaving a narrow aisle along the wall on either side of the building; in some cases a center aisle was also provided. The back row was generally against the rear wall, which afforded the advantage of a back rest. A sloping board was pinned securely against the wall to accommodate the class in writing. These benches were all made the same height to accommodate grown-up people. The idea that the seat should be made to fit the pupil instead of the pupil distorting his body to fit the seat was not adopted until some years later. Then, too, these school houses were used for all sorts of public meetings, such as debating societies, spelling schools, voting precincts, religious services, and political gatherings. The master's desk was constructed of rough boards and resembled a large store box. There were no blackboards, no maps nor charts nor any of the modern aids now familiar to every school child, and considered indispensable equipment to the school room.

The school yard was generally small and not

considered worthy of attention. No effort was made to beautify or adorn with trees or flowers. If perchance a stately oak which had escaped the woodman's ax spread its shady branches near by, it was permitted to remain. But in the prairie districts, where nature had not been so lavish with her decorations, the building often stood on a desolate spot, exposed to the piercing winds of winter and the scorching rays of the sun in summer. There was no thought of making the school room and its surroundings attractive and inviting to the child. Its esthetic taste was ignored. The playground was also left entirely to chance. The children's games in those days were few and simple—black man, bear, hide and seek, town ball, old cat and a few more comprised the list. There was no supervision of the children at play, except in case of an accident or fight, when the master would show his hand. In fact, it was not thought that play was an important part of the child's school life. The school year was limited to three or four months in winter and would begin right after corn “shuckin'.” In later years a summer term of several months became the custom.

### **The School Master**

The school master represented a distinct type of the early settler. He was generally a man of dignified bearing and self-conscious of his own importance. Although possessing limited knowledge and no professional training, he was regarded as the common reservoir from whom the people drew when in need of advice or information—the clearing house of all knowledge in the community. Naturally and necessarily, he was careful and diplomatic in maintaining this reputation of a walking cyclopedia. While active, and a recognized leader in the affairs of the community, he was reserved in all matters liable to lessen his influence or expose his deficiency. Little was required of him in the school room and little was given. He was valued more for his ability to “keep order,” and this was often measured by the frequency and severity with which he flogged the big boys in school. If he could read aloud, show the pupils how to form letters with a pen, pronounce the words in the spelling-book, never fail to do the sums when referred to him, and occasionally carry away the honors at a neighboring spelling school, he possessed all the qualifications that should be required of him. His art or method in teaching, his ability in training

the child-mind were not taken into consideration as an important factor. Yet he was a man of good moral character and manifested a pride in the dignity of his calling. He lived up to his highest ideal in "keeping school." In a few instances he was a college graduate and was lavish in his use of Greek and Latin phrases. He boarded around among his patrons and was satisfied both with his board and his very meager salary.

### Methods in Teaching

The early school master had no definite idea of methods. He was given no normal training. He knew nothing of psychology, nothing of the law that governs the unfolding of the child-mind. In consequence the child received very little benefit from its first few years' attendance at school. It was never questioned that what the master knew he was able to teach. If he could read, he could teach reading; if he could cipher, he could teach arithmetic to the child. Every subject was presented in an arbitrary way with no thought connection. His entire method was based upon the idea that the child cannot think and that it must learn the arbitrary forms first, independent of any thought relation. Accordingly, it was taught



the alphabet, to recognize and pronounce the letters one by one; in arithmetic, to sing the multiplication table; in language to commit to memory the names of the parts of speech and the definitions and rules of syntax; in spelling and reading, to pronounce the words aloud, with no reference to associated thought or practice. An appeal was made to the child's memory to retain arbitrary characters and meaningless definitions, permitting the imagination and understanding to remain dormant.

Even the text-books were arranged upon this error. There were no graded school libraries, no child literature appealing to the child's imagination or understanding; no language lessons, the primary grammars being made up of rules and definitions, while the spelling books presented the words in long columns according to the number of syllables with no reference to their future use or meaning. The arithmetics were made up largely of long and involved rules and obsolete tables, which the older pupils were compelled to memorize and which were soon forgotten and seldom applied.

The opening day of school at the beginning of the term was usually a notable event for the children of the district, which was evidenced by a

full attendance. The smaller children were eager to get a peep at the new school master, and the larger boys were on hand to get his number and to lay their plans for his dethronement later in the term. The master generally began his day's program by presenting a long list of rules for the government of the school during the term. With a stern countenance he would read these rules aloud, placing special emphasis here and there at points where infractions were most liable to occur. These rules were often negative in form and suggested to the pupil new and untried fields for mischief which without this suggestion might have escaped his attention. In some instances the pupil was required to memorize this code and to co-operate in its enforcement by keeping books on the conduct of the other children and report to the master any infractions that he was able to discover. This method of espionage sometimes led to feuds among the boys, who nursed their grievances for many years afterwards.

Corporal punishment was recognized as the most dependable means to insure obedience and stimulate a healthy and sustaining interest in the lessons. This conviction was so universal and so well established that even the pupils regarded it as an indispensable part of the daily program.

It was not the last resort, but oftener the first. A quiver of hickory or willow withes was kept in full view as a constant reminder to the refractory pupil. These withes were called into use upon slight provocation and their application to the pupil's body was not a mere form but a vigorous and painful operation.

### Results

It must not be inferred that these early schools were a failure. On the contrary they were a success because they accomplished the purpose for which they were maintained. They gave the children a working knowledge of the rudiments. The child learned to read and write and spell and enough mathematics for all ordinary business transactions. He also learned the important lessons of obedience and patriotism. Out of these schools came desirable citizens and neighbors; men and women who became capable and trustworthy in public affairs and successful in business activities.

It is true that great advancement has been made in the schools since this early period. Better school houses have been built, comfortable and elegant furniture has been installed, valuable and useful apparatus has been added, school

libraries and better text-books have been adopted, normal schools have sprung up everywhere and technically trained teachers with certificates of qualification are employed; the school year has been trebled, with the school taxes more than quadrupled, and yet the little old school houses that dotted the prairies of Concord township over a half century ago were the compelling influence that molded the civilization of this centennial year. It had its mission and it performed it faithfully and well.

### Religion

Religion was a matter of the first concern with the early settler. This sentiment found expression at the very beginning of the new settlement. At first the people congregated in their log cabins to worship. In the summer season the shady groves in which the community abounded were found desirable for the purpose of holding religious services. The basket meeting and the camp meeting were in great favor. The program was usually made up of four parts—singing of hymns, the season of prayer, the testimony and the sermon. The entire congregation was the choir. The prevailing denominations in the new country were the Methodist, the Baptist and the

United Brethren. These appealed more to the emotional nature, which was one reason for their greater popularity. In the township the Methodist at first was perhaps the most active because their method of propaganda was better adapted to the new country. In the absence of close organizations denominational lines were not so strictly drawn. The new settler was not so particular about the name or even the doctrine, so long as he got the experience and was permitted to speak of the faith within him. When the school house arrived on the scene, it was used for both church and school purposes, and was free alike to all denominations and to all preachers who happened along. The early circuits necessarily covered a large territory and the preacher's appointments were far between and sometimes uncertain; his visits, however, were appreciated all the more and his message received with greater interest. The people assembled from far and near, coming on horse back or in lumber wagons, bringing their entire families. These gatherings lasted the entire day and well filled lunch baskets were provided for all who came. New Year's Eve was always celebrated by religious services, "to watch the old year out and the new year in." This service continued from early evening until after

midnight. More than one sermon was usually delivered on this occasion and some time by the same preacher. The camp meeting and the basket meeting were always held out of doors, and the former continued for two or three weeks. The attendants from a distance slept in their wagons or tents at night and were supplied with abundant ration. The big meeting of the early period was the religious revival which was held in the winter season in some convenient school house. The term was decidedly indefinite and often lasted until spring work beckoned the farmer home. These special midwinter meetings had a two-fold purpose—the conversion of the sinner and the advancement of the righteous to a higher Christian experience. Preparation was made in advance for the success of these meetings. The preacher exhorted his flock to pray fervently for a Pentecostal downpouring of the Holy Spirit and the conversion of sinners. The regular sermon was followed by a lengthy exhortation and invitation to the sinner to “Flee the wrath to come.” This warning was pressed with the greatest earnestness and insistence and the preacher’s voice could be distinctly heard above the chorus of the congregational singing. As the people gathered for the service the men and boys took

their seats on one side of the room and the women and girls on the other. This rule was carefully observed. As all the men attended church as well as the women, equal space was allotted to each.



Mrs. Benj. Ely, many years a resident of Iroquois. Seventy-five years a member of the Methodist Church.

A long bench was reserved near the pulpit for the mourners; this was called the mourners' bench. The bench at the extreme rear of the room was recognized as the seat of the scornful. As the meetings advanced and the interest grew,

it was not uncommon for both these benches to be occupied, the one by those first brought under the influence of the Gospel message, the other by those who came to scoff. But as the meetings continued and the message became more and more irresistible, the seat of the scornful melted away under its influence, its occupants one by one taking their places at the mourners' bench, groaning aloud under their conviction of sin and praying for mercy and forgiveness. The religious fervor which pervaded the early day revival was intense. Men and women sang and shouted in ecstasy of joy until they fell prostrate to the floor from exhaustion, where they remained in a semi-conscious state until assisted to their feet by some devout but less emotional brother or sister. This revival wave often spread from one center of population to another, until it gathered under its influence the people of a wide area of territory.

### Early Churches

It is claimed that Rev. S. R. Beggs was the first to preach in Concord township in the year 1832. In 1833 the first Methodist circuit was established, which embraced the territory from Spring Creek to Rensselaer, and from the Wash river to the Kankakee. The first pastor



assigned to this circuit was Rev. Essex, who held a series of meetings the same year at the home of Benjamin Fry, one mile east of Iroquois, who has been mentioned as the first permanent settler of the township. This was perhaps the first Methodist revival meeting held in the county. The following year Rev. Springer was assigned the same circuit and organized the first church society in the township. This society grew from the smallest beginning, Benjamin Fry being one of its active members from the first. It met regularly at the Liberty school house, and finally, in 1872, erected a church just east of the township line and named it Morris Chapel. In 1850 a United Brethren society was formed in the Enslen school house south of the river by the Rev. Jacob Kenoyer, who preached many times in the township. In 1854 the second Methodist society was organized in the township, which held regular meetings in the frame school house in Iroquois. This society also prospered and in 1875 erected a church edifice in the village under the pastorate of Rev. Calhoun. In 1870, Samuel Warrick and William Brown were the promoters in the building of a church near the west line of the township, which was named Prairie Delle. The Christian denomination began active work much later

in the township. Irregular meetings were held in Iroquois as early as 1880. Rev. Holloway of Morocco made frequent visits, preaching to the people and baptizing the new converts. These baptismal ceremonies were conducted at the Iroquois river near the wagon bridge and were usually the occasion of a large gathering. This society was active and aggressive and in 1895, under the pastorate of Rev. Crank, erected a brick church in Iroquois.

### Pioneer Preachers

The pioneer preacher will long be remembered and revered for his manly qualities and moral courage as well as for his physical endurance. His scholastic attainments were no measure of his wonderful power over men for their betterment. He relied on God and his own powerful voice, developed by long outdoor practice, for his success. It is said that even in secret prayer he could be heard a mile. His worldly belongings were few and scant, and even his library was in some instances limited to a hymn book and a well thumbed pocket bible. In some instances his early education had been so neglected that he could barely read and write, yet he was strong in the faith and positive of his message. His theology

sometimes crude and his language defiant of the rules of syntax, he had the courage of his convictions and he shot his Gospel message straight home to the heart of the trembling sinner. He sometimes lost his text, but oftener he never found it. He had no fear of losing his stipend on account of his plain, direct preaching, because he received none worthy of mention. He rode on horse back through swamps and forded rivers in rain and storm and blizzard to fill distant appointments, without even a thought of salary. Free from mercenary motive or worldly ambition, he gave his full measure of service cheerfully for the cause. He was a recognized moral force in the community and his influence upon the family was wholesome and uplifting. By his self-sacrifice and devotion, as well as by his preaching he stamped the verities of the Christian religion indelibly upon his own and future generations. Like the pioneer school master, he has performed his mission and has passed into history, but his influence still lives.

"As some tall cliff that lifts its awful form,  
Swells from the vale and midway cleaves the storm,  
So round its breast the rolling clouds are spread,  
Eternal sunshine settles on his head."

\* \* \* \* \*

"At church, with meek and unaffected grace,  
His looks adorned the venerable place,  
Truth from his lips prevailed with double sway,  
And fools who came to scoff remained to pray."

### The Civil War

In 1861, when the ominous clouds of secession darkened our fair land and threatened the very existence of the Union, the young men of Concord township responded to the call to arms, ready and willing to make the supreme sacrifice in defense of the flag and the institutions which they had been taught to love from childhood. At that time the population of the county was little more than twelve thousand, and yet her enlistments into the army and navy during the four years of civil war that followed, were over seventeen hundred. Of this number, more than three hundred, or twenty per cent, were killed or died in the service. Concord township furnished her full quota of as brave young men as ever wore uniform or died in battle. A very few are yet living of those who returned. Below are given the names of those who served in the War of the Rebellion from this township, who were killed in action or died in the service:

Wm. R. Fry, died at Camp Butler, April 10, 1863.

Mathew Pineo, died at Youngs Point, March 13, 1863.

Cornélius Morgan, died at Youngs Point, April 5, 1862.

Samuel Morgan, died at Memphis, Nov. 26, 1864.

Cyrus Murray, died at Memphis, Dec. 7, 1862.

Abraham Markley, died at Memphis, Dec. 6, 1862.

Riley Lister, died at Camp Butler, Oct. 28, 1863.

Clause Halderman, died at Camp Hancock, Ill., Oct. 19, 1862.

Henry Fry, died at Camp Yates, Ill., Jan. 13, 1864.

Thomas Carpenter, died at Memphis, Dec. 15, 1862.

Harvey Barr, killed at Arkansas Post, Jan. 11, 1863.

Benjamin Appleget, died at Corinth, Miss., Aug. 17, 1863.

J. A. Whiteman, died at St. Louis, July 7, 1863.

Isaac M. Caldwell, died at Memphis, May 4, 1863.

Amos W. Markley, killed near Jackson, Miss., July 7, 1864.

Thomas W. Mantor, died at Cairo, Nov. 15, 1863.

Samuel Clemens, died at Moscow, Tenn., Feb. 2, 1863.

Abel Burroughs, died at Vicksburg, Aug. 22, 1864.

Joseph Eastburn, died at Sheldon, Dec. 9, 1864.

James H. O'Brine, died at Vicksburg, Dec. 26, 1863.

Joseph Sherril, killed at Resaco, Ga., May 14, 1864.

Isaac Hoagland, died at Smithton, Mo., Jan. 3, 1862.

William Gilbert, died Nov. 11, 1861.

Philander Foster, died at Tipton, Mo., Dec. 25, 1861.

Elisha Karr, killed at Drury's Bluff, Va., May 14, 1864.

Calvin Warrick, died at Memphis, Tenn.

Of all those who enlisted from Concord, only three are still residing in the township. They are Marion Karr, Abraham Carpenter and Peter B. Strickler. John B. Salkeld and Theodore Yates, residing in Iroquois, are veterans of the Civil War, but are not credited to this township.

### Change in Population

Although Concord township is distinctly a rural community in which changes are comparatively few and the percentage is comparatively large of



Abraham Carpenter of Iroquois, 82 years old. One of the five remaining veterans of the Civil War living in Concord Township. Co. I, 113th Illinois Infantry.

those who own and occupy their own homes, it is interesting to note that of its present population of something over one thousand, less than five per cent have lived in the township for a period of fifty years. Below are the names of residents

at this date, August, 1918, who have resided in the township for half a century. It is possible that some names have been overlooked:

Strickler, Peter	Eastburn, Jesse R., Jr.
Fry, Henry S.	Shepherd, Mrs. Cyrus
Hook, Robert	Appleget, Sarah
Hook, Mrs. Ann	Shrum, Mrs. Elias
Fires, Mrs. Mary	Raymond, Daniel
Lambert, James	Ely, Salem
Frownfelter, F. W.	Patterson, Mrs. Alice
Reese, Henry	Maggs, Catharine
Plummer, Elizabeth	Hogle, H. S.
Webster, Wm. A.	Hogle, Mrs. H. S.
Shepherd, Cyrus	Nosker, Mary A.
Torbet, Anvil	Stam, Mrs. Minnie
Shrum, Elias	Frazier, Mrs. Martha
Christofferson, Sarah	Lambert, Truman
Ely, Miss Lillie	Anderson, Mrs. Agnes
Whiteman, H. M.	Plummer, Henry
Whiteman, A. L.	Murray, Jacob H.
Whiteman, Horace	Coughenour, Mrs. Ellen
Frazier, John	Gilbert, Leonard
Lambert, Chas. W.	Clark, Mrs. Lovina
Clark, Mrs. May	Cross, Mrs. Mary
Karr, Marion	Cross, Mrs. Florence
Peace, S. N.	Warrick, Chas. H.

### Period of Development

The third period in the history of the township begins about 1855 and continues down to the present time. This period is remarkable for the wonderful growth and development that have been crowded within the space of about sixty years.

The clouds were passing, the sky was clearing and the early settler began to see over the top into the promised land. A number of causes have contributed to the wonderful transformation of the new country and its surprising industrial development during this period. Grist mills sprang up and were in operation at different points. One was located at Old Texas, near the southwest corner of the township, one at Old Middleport, then the county seat of Iroquois county, one at Auroma and one at Brook, Indiana. These mills afforded a local market for the farmer's wheat and gave him the opportunity to receive flour in exchange by paying the miller a liberal toll for his grist. These mills served their purpose for the time and were a great benefit to the people whom they served, but were not able long to withstand the competition of the large power mills whose product the railroads brought to the local markets.

The railroads as a factor in building up the new country cannot be overestimated. The Illinois Central was completed in 1856, what is now the Toledo, Peoria and Western in 1860, and the C., C., C. & St. L. (Big Four) in 1871. These new means of transportation proved a great boon to the farmers of the township. The Illinois Cen-



tral furnished a market as near as Kankakee, the Toledo, Peoria & Western, within one mile of the south line, Sheldon, and the Big Four established a first class market in the very center of the township. The farmer was no longer compelled to drive or haul his live stock to Chicago or some other distant point, but could ship his grain, his cattle and hogs and other products of the farm through his own local markets, and receive in exchange the highest current prices. The commodities that he needed on the farm and in the home were shipped in and kept in stock for his convenience. What before required weeks to accomplish he was now able to do in a few hours.

The people had already seen the necessity of public improvements. Taxes were levied and attention was directed to the building of bridges and the grading and improving of the principal public highways. This work has continued with increasing effort and expense and will continue until the township is well supplied with hard roads. Local saw-mills were installed at convenient places along the timber belt, and the giant oaks which had defied the storms of the ages, yielded to the ax and the cross-cut saw, and the logs were converted into rough lumber for building purposes. This domestic lumber was avail-

able for every part of the frame house or barn or crib. The process was indeed slow and tedious, but the carpenter was able to work with his hand tools the rough board into flooring, siding, shingles, finish and every part of the building. This method continued until the big mills began to supply the local market with dressed lumber at a lower price than the carpenter could make it.

The railroads brought coal from the mines and supplied the local markets at a reasonable price. This solved the fuel problem, and was an important factor in the settlement and development of the prairie districts. The early prejudice against the prairie soil had been removed, but the farmer still dreaded the chopping and the long distance haul of wood as fuel, and the long stretch of prairie did not look to him inviting. He was quick to see, however, that the use of coal instead of wood materially changed the situation. As a result the prairie districts were rapidly settled and cultivated, regardless of its distance from timber, and coal has been used as fuel almost exclusively. It was found also that the prairie soil was as rich and productive as the land adjoining the timber. In time the sloughs were drained, buildings and fences were erected and well improved farms appeared upon what was supposed

to be waste land, or so far removed that it would always remain worthless.

Artificial drainage has yielded wonderful results in the development of the country and the increasing of the productive power of the soil. The present high state of cultivation would have been impossible otherwise. The idea was at first very simple, the farmer using his spade to make an open ditch, so that the water might escape from the low places. Then as the idea developed, laws were made creating and controlling drainage districts covering large areas under one system. The large dredging-machine came in response to this demand. The farmers followed the idea by tiling their farms until every acre is available for cultivation. The work of clearing up the timber land is still going on. It is found that this land is fertile and is well adapted to all kinds of grain. In time the trees and stumps will disappear and this belt lying on both sides of the river, which in an early day was supposed to have no value except for its timber, will be developed into well improved farms.

During this period agricultural colleges and farm journals came into popular recognition. Their influence stimulated scientific methods of agriculture and stock raising. The farmers of

Concord were not slow to adopt the better way. The old slip-shod methods were laid aside, and doing things at random from the force of habit gradually became unpopular. The farmer learned how to fertilize and prepare the soil, how to select the seed and to plant and cultivate the crop. He studied the nature of his soil and the best methods of rotation. He studied how to select and improve the breed of his live stock in order to produce the largest measure of beef or pork or mutton with the least amount of grain consumed. He learned the art of conserving health and comfort in the home. Surface wells with their disease germs were discarded and artesian wells came into general use. Screen doors and windows became a necessity, breeding places for flies and mosquitoes about the premises were removed. These sanitary precautions brought better health and less sickness to the community. The diseases incident to the new country, such as ague, chills, malaria, typhoid and milk-sickness, have been overcome almost entirely by eliminating the causes.

The farmers have also been progressive in the use of improved farm machinery. They have discarded the old and adopted the new. The latest improved separator, the harvester, the cul-

tivator, the tractor—in fact, every new machine or device that has been proven a success in labor saving or in doing better work has been welcomed and put into service. The inventive genius of this country has accomplished great things for the farmer. Let him make a list of the farm tools which have been discarded during the last fifty years, and another list of those which he has adopted in their places because they served his purpose better, and he will be amazed as well as grateful.

The farmer's wife has also shared in this social and economic evolution. Into her home have come one by one modern ideas and labor saving equipment, which have lifted her above the drudgery of the past and given her the time and freedom to enjoy life and exercise her social and benevolent nature. It is true that in many instances she has been compelled to wait and to continue to drudge in the old way while the implement house was full of labor-saving machinery for the field. This discrimination is rapidly passing. Her vision has become enlarged and her influence through social organizations and at the ballot box is being recognized.

Concord township is an agricultural and stock-raising community. Other lines of industry have

not been attempted to speak of. There are a few instances of dairy-farming, all of which have been successful. Farming has been confined to the staple crops, such as wheat, corn and oats, clover and timothy. The farmers have been conserva-



R. F. Karr of Concord Township. Former member of Board of Review of Iroquois County. Secretary of Farmers' Elevator.

tive. The products of the garden and the orchard have been limited to the needs of home consumption, stock-raising to horses, cattle and hogs. Sheep have been found to be profitable. Yet it is known that the soil and climate are well adapted

to other grains which would prove equally remunerative. The history of the township is a history of its farmers.

The result is, with its industrious population, its advanced methods of farming, of drainage, the use of modern machinery, its advantages of soil and climate, Concord township has been developed until it has become one of the garden spots of the earth—second to none, in a county which ranks fourth in the United States. It has before it great possibilities—no one can measure its future. It may be only at the threshold of a still greater development. It has been proven scientifically that its soil will admit of much higher cultivation, and its productive capacity of a corresponding larger yield. With its present population of more than a thousand people and its one hundred and forty or more well improved farms, it may be only in its swaddling clothes, and its full grown manhood yet to come.

### The World War

Concord township has always responded promptly to its country's call. In the very beginning of its history, when the population embraced only a few families the young men shouldered their rifles and mounted their ponies and went forth to protect their homes from a threatened attack by the Indians. Its patriotism was again proven in the Civil War when it contributed its full share in the preservation of the Union. This Centennial year affords another example of the genuine loyalty of its citizenship, who are contributing willingly of their means for the support of the government, the women are working daily through the various organizations adding their bit, while the young men are saying farewell to home and family and loved ones, and are crossing the Atlantic to face a formidable enemy in war, and if necessary to make the supreme sacrifice in defense of their country and our country, that justice and right may prevail and Democracy may be made safe throughout the world and for all time. The following is a list of the young men who have joined the colors from Concord township:

Ora Wagner, Corp. Glt.

Addison Brown, U. S. Navy.



Fern Scharlach, Recruiting Officer, Detroit.  
Ed Welch, Sergt. Co. D, 64th Infantry.  
Bennett Karr, Headquarters Co. 28th.  
H. H. Strickler, Co. H, 122d Infantry.  
Roy Extine, Sergt. 312th Ammunition Train.  
Gail Lambert, Co. G, 4th Infantry.  
Ruel Dayton, 263d Aero Aviation Squadron.  
Frank Welch, 270th Aero Squadron.  
E. E. Shult, Co. A, 326 Bin. Light Tank.  
Herchel Darling, Battery C, 68th Regt. L. I. S.  
Jesse Stam, 68th Artillery C. A. C.  
Harold Cross, 7th Co., 68th Regt.  
Gail Clark, 7th Co., 68th Regt.  
Joseph Leeds, 7th Co., 68th Regt.  
John Stam, Battery C., 68th Regt.  
Robert Holloway, Casual Co., Replacement Battalion,  
Am. Ex.  
Russel Brown, Co. D, of 339th M. G. Bn.  
Ambrose Haag, Co. H, 62nd Infantry.  
Ray Webster, Co. 346 Machine Gun Inf.  
Roy LePage, Co. C, 3rd Inf.  
Jennings Stroup, Co. 27th, Group 145.  
Mark Tebo, Co. 127, Group 141.  
Marshall Roy, Co. H, 62nd Inf.  
Milo Brown, I. S. of A. Dept.  
Jesse Torbet, Wagon Train No. S. C., Columbia.  
Abe Hoagland, Casual Co., Replacement Battalion, Am.  
Ex.  
Alonzo Easter, honorably discharged.  
Austin Smith, honorably discharged.  
Tracy Freel, Battery B, 317th Field Artillery.  
Basile Freel, Co. 15, Jefferson Barracks.

